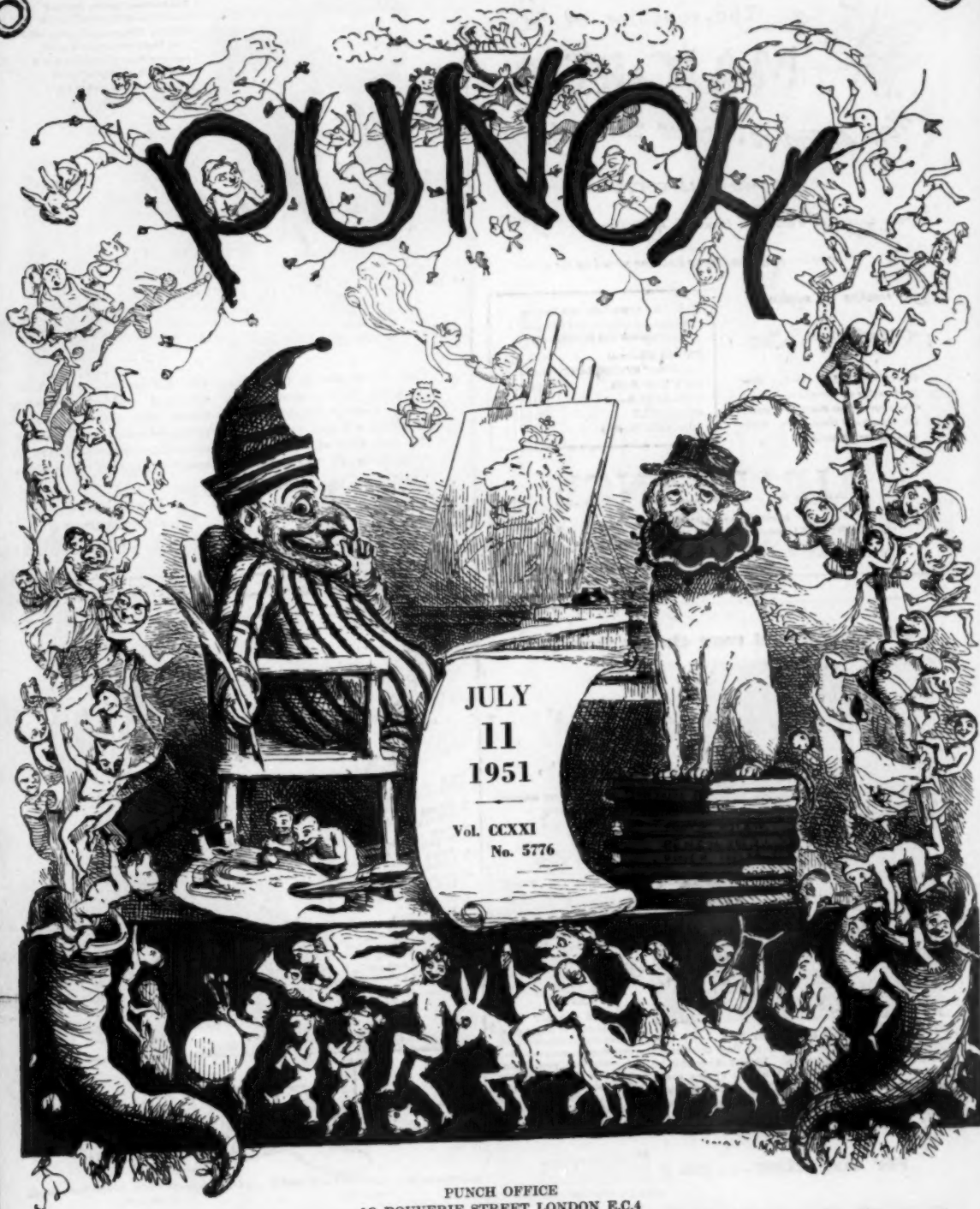


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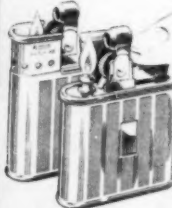
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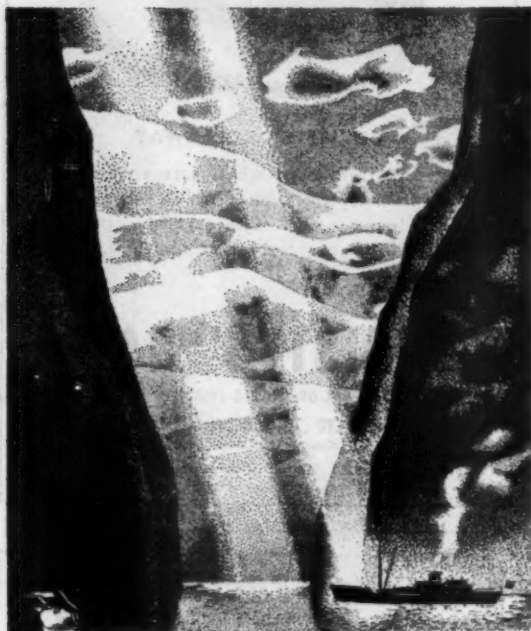
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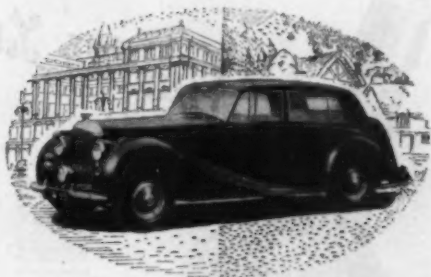
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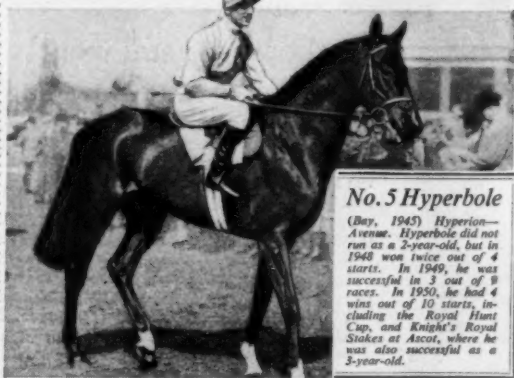
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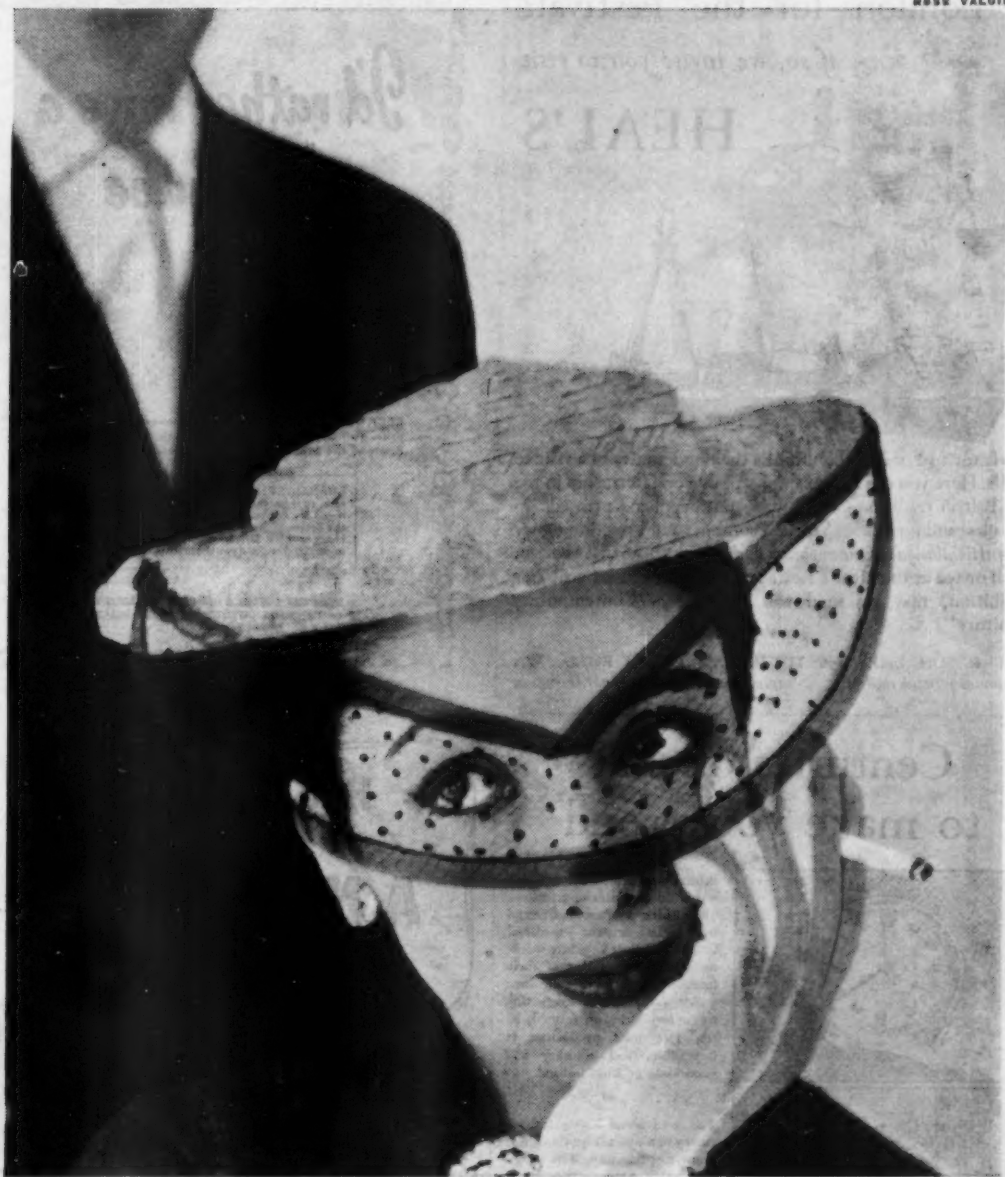
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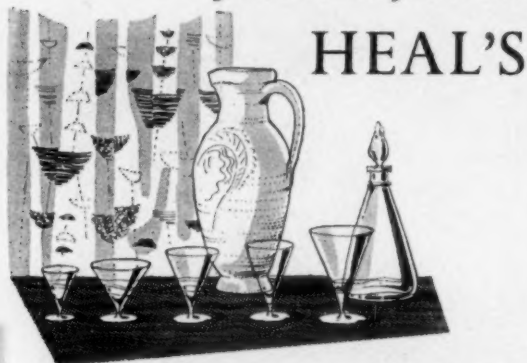
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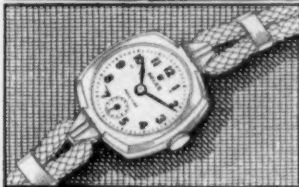
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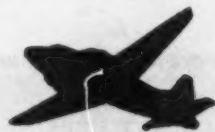
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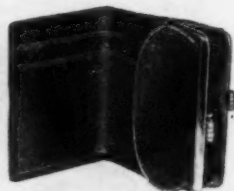
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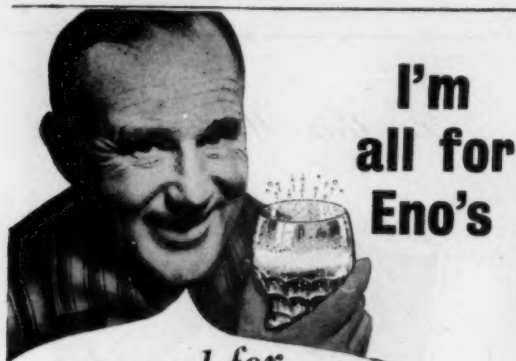
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CHARIVARIA

It was explained in a London county court that taxi drivers save up over long periods for their cabs. It won't be long before passengers have to do the same.

According to a report just issued, the historic naval buildings at English Harbour, Antigua, one of Britain's major Caribbean refitting depots during the eighteenth-century wars, are "in a deplorable state of preservation" and American tourists can inspect them for 6d. Still, the time will soon come when we can charge them half-a-crown to look at the ruins.

According to Mrs. Ella Gasking, a member of the Hotels Executive, a "really good blend of tea is now being served in railway refreshment rooms." This will be no surprise to those who have always thought railway tea a beverage of the first water.

A naturalist reports that he timed a snail in his garden and found that it took seventy-three minutes to travel the length of a cricket-pitch. We trust he refrained from giving it a slow hand-clap.

"The first priority must, therefore, remain with strategic atomic combs."—*Sunday paper*
Radioactive barbers please note.

An idealist wants to know why scientists don't use their knowledge to build us an entirely new world. Give them a chance: they haven't finished getting rid of the old one yet.

"DID YOU
KNOW . . ."

A glass of water becomes completely flat in a quarter of an hour.—*"The Derby Telegraph"*
Yes. Go on to question two.

A grand piano used in Service messes during the war was sold at a Ministry of Supply auction in Glasgow for 2s. 6d. The age of the instrument was not mentioned, but we understand the purchaser arrived at a rough estimate by counting the number of rings on the lid.

"Villagers of Pahala-Millewa and Horagala have made a habit of eating monkeys. Large numbers are shot.

If action is not taken by the authorities the working population will be badly depleted."

"Times of Ceylon"

Perhaps the villagers could take over.

In New Zealand, a women's institute considering the rival merits of co-educational and "straight" schools concluded that boys should go to "straight" boys' schools and girls to co-educational schools. It would be interesting to know what they concluded should be done about it.



C



29



DORRIS

IN SHORT

WE are living through stirring times at Gargantua House.

A few months ago we bought the old *National Journal of Archaeological Studies*, which had been drifting steadily nearer the rocks for some years; and, following our usual practice, put in a new editor to smarten it up a bit. This man—whom nobody blames—said that before we did anything else we ought to change the title.

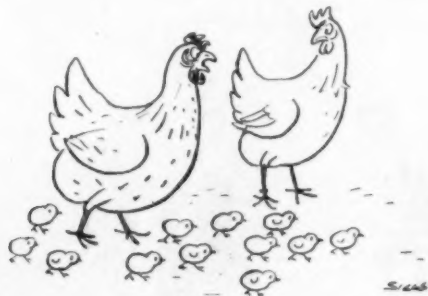
It is a matter of record that, at first, the chairman resisted the idea. He fully realized, he said, that the title was a mouthful. He instanced, however, several established journals of ours which did not seem unduly hampered by lengthy titles. He further gave it as his considered view that one *Scoop* in a firm like ours was quite enough.

This last view, incidentally, is pretty general. *Scoop* is our rather would-be-American little paper that sells the week's news a second time by taking out any articles and conjunctions in the copy and making it all look as if it has just come through on the teleprinter. Nobody is very proud of *Scoop*.

However, the man who had landed *The National Journal of Archaeological Studies* stuck to his guns. Why not make it *The Journal of Archaeological Studies*, he asked, and skip the "National"? The chairman was not impressed, but decided to get other opinions. Someone, more for the look of the thing than anything else, suggested "Archaeological Studies"; and someone else suggested "Archæology."

The chairman, who likes to let other people flounder before putting his finger on the crux, said that, of course, the word "Archæology" was precisely what was wrong. What we wanted was a shorter word that meant the same sort of thing.

We were now on our toes. "Pre-History" was put forward but got no support, and "Antiquity" got very little. "Annals" was better received—the chairman shrewdly pointing out that it was the shortest yet—but the general feeling was that it really meant something else.



"I thought they'd been eggs long enough."

There was considerably more approval for "Then." The chairman liked "Then" very much. None of us felt we were likely to get more of the essential idea into fewer letters—until the chairman had his own flash of inspiration.

"Ago," said the chairman.

It looks very nice, too, in tall red letters in the top left-hand corner of the cover. Just how proud the chairman is of his creative moment is something the other Gargantua publications have been finding out, in rapid succession.

Our new monthly, *Commercial Efficiency*, is now to be *Push*. *Modern Tannery Practice* has already become *Hide*. *The Househunter and Flatfancier* is going to be *Seek*. *The Licensed Victualling Weekly* is settling down nicely as *Wallop*; and we are hoping that the editor of *The Journal of Psychic Phenomena*, who has been with us a long time, will soon be reconciled to *Spook*.

There is a little difficulty at the moment over *The Coastwise Shipping Intelligencer*. Its editor is complaining that at one time or another he has heard "Bilge" suggested for a good half-dozen Gargantua publications, and he doesn't see why he should get it now. He will, though. Editors are easier to find than titles.

Meanwhile, don't be deceived by a new, rather meek-looking little effort that will shortly be on the bookstalls—*The Gargantua Weekly Survey of Current Events*. It is just that the chairman has begun to feel there is something a little ordinary about *Scoop*.

6 6

THE LAST FREEDOM

I HEARD the telephone ring in a basement flat,
I saw it through the railings and unwashed pane.
But its owners would not answer; for they were out,
flown to Sicily, walking in the sun.

They were on holiday, strolling among the honey-coloured and fluted columns of Syracuse, of Acragas and Segesta. Nor could any telephone reach them with good or with evil news.

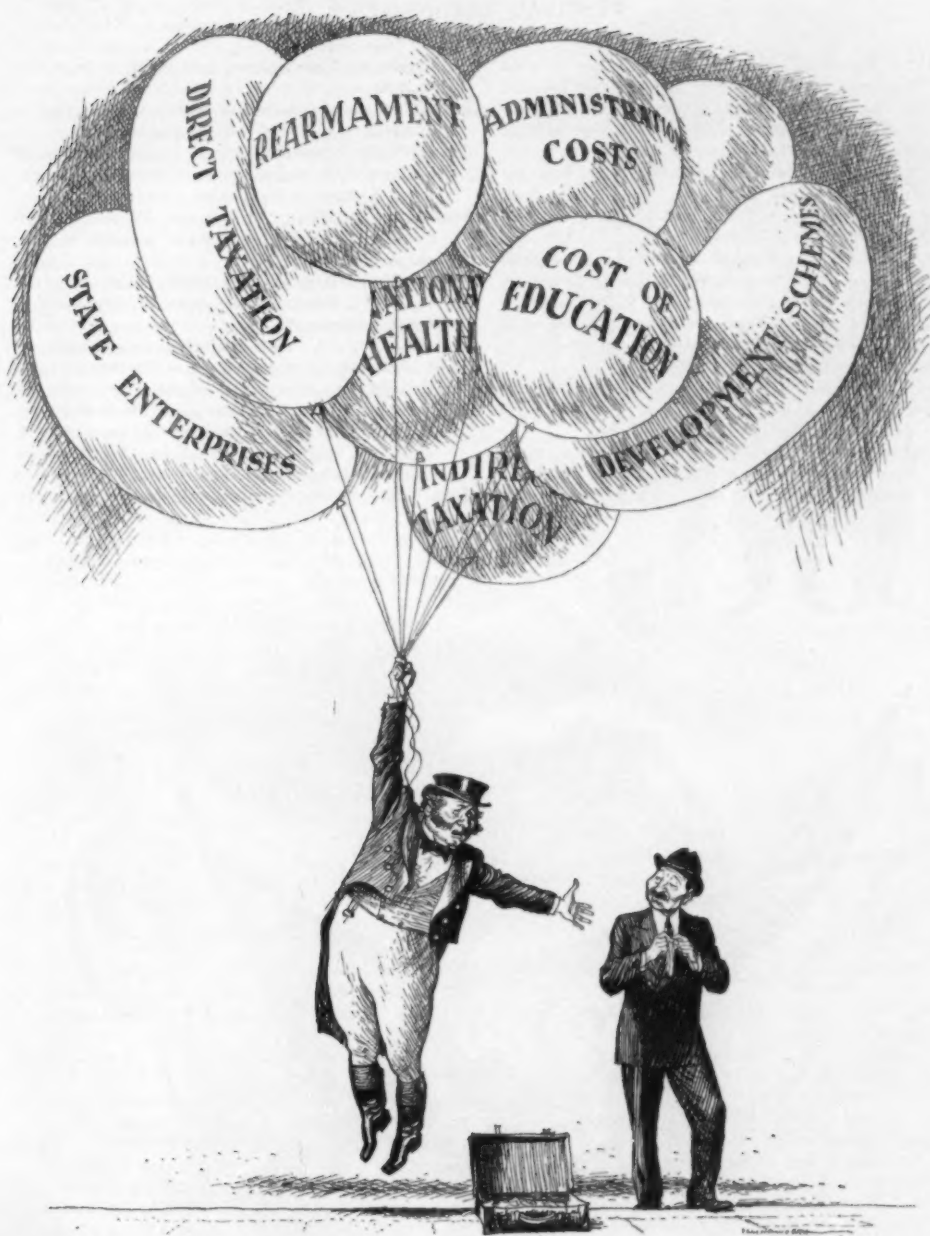
They were on Etna, scrambling over the scented shoulders of lava or resting by rough sheep-tracks, whistling tunes for the New York stage invented, Daphnis and Chloë in shorts and hiking packs.

They were in swim-suits, plunging into waters where the racing Trojan keels once cleft the foam, scribbling picture-postcards or brief air-letters by bays where the Punic captains yielded to Rome.

They were in Sicily. There was complete cessation of milk and *The Times* and the postman's morning rap;

but this was their holiday's ultimate consummation, when I heard the telephone's fanfare falter and stop.

HH



"MUST THEY ALL BE BLOWN UP SO TIGHT?"

FESTIVAL FRAGMENTS

IV

GUIDE. We "did" the Exhibition; these Festival Gardens should not be "done" but just frivelled about in. We should let our intellectual framework sag a bit here. After all, we have Government Instructions to indulge in slap and tickle. As the members of this party do not arouse my flightier instincts, I shall go off on my own and roam the grounds like a butterfly in spring.

JOCK PARCUTT. The advertisement of the trip said clearly that the Guide would be present from start to finish, an amenity that, though burdensome, we shall not forgo unless bought off with a rebate.

LUKE DOOM. We'll release you if you take the child with you.

GUIDE. Trapped! I'll stay.

MIGNONNE PARCUTT. I just want to ride gently to and fro on the Railway. Wasn't it designed by Sir Alfred Munnings or someone?

MRS. CRAB-BROWN. I got so broken in by the Exhibition that I could not dream of tackling this unsystematically. I must first make up my mind whether

to take the Railway from right to left or from left to right.

JABEZ CROOMB. Can't we stop this tasting of delights in advance and move off the pier?

GUIDE. Sorry, I was flummoxed. I was working with the Exhibition map and there were too many trees. In we go, merrily if possible.

JOCK PARCUTT. What a lot of shops! We should have brought the string bag. What on earth is that gangway up there?

GUIDE. That will be the Tree Walk. There are giant snails and things to complete the illusion of a tree-top fairyland.

MRS. CRAB-BROWN. As it is so visible from the ground I shall take it as traversed. You would have thought that every inch of the way would be enshrouded in a leafy bower; or, by a charming fancy, are the creatures supposed to come alive at night and chew away the leaves? Perhaps they want a view of the Mermaid Fountain.

JOCK PARCUTT. My boy, we'll wait for you while you



"I've always maintained that the weather's no deterrent to a picnic, if you use a little ingenuity."

delight in the Festival Clock, which is due to perform in a minute or two.

JUNIOR PARCUTT. As I put it in a recent essay for the good Mr. Briggs, modern man is so obsessed with Time that he feels compelled to prettify it. One watches the audience with an interest one cannot accord the performance.

MIGNONNE PARCUTT. I like the little tune. There should be a credit for the composer as well as the designer. I am prepared to like anything, except Junior.

GUIDE. The thing to do with the Grand Vista is to look down it. Very elegant and light-hearted!

LUKE DOOM. I am going to sit by the Fountain Lake. There can't be anything more attractive than this, so I shall not waste time looking for it.

GUIDE. Excuse my asking you, but aren't you eschewing rather a lot?

LUKE DOOM. I hide my laziness by posing as selective.

JOCK PARCUTT. Junior will either throw himself upon the Fun Fair, like the real boy he isn't, or spend the rest of the day between the Children's Zoo and the Boating Pool.

JUNIOR. I shall apply to the nearest Juvenile Court for a Care and Protection Order.

(Some time later.)

MRS. CRAB-BROWN. After trying some of the more brutal amusements, I shall stand and quiver in the wind while I sort myself out. My heart has been in my throat, in my boots and on my sleeve. It is time that it worked its way back home. On the Big Dipper I sat next to an Australian whose larynx I seem to have acquired. Fair cow!

MIGNONNE PARCUTT. I expected to find some ski-ing. If they can have it on Hampstead Heath, why not South of the River? You have only to invite Norwegians to compete and they bring their own snow.

JUNIOR PARCUTT. There are many varieties of Festivity ignored by the Organizers, chariot-racing, for example, and contests between lions and minorities.

JABEZ CROOMB. I am combining the idea of you and of lions in a happy day-dream. I'll treat you to six goes running on the Boomerang.

JUNIOR PARCUTT. Like the Rotor, it applies the principle of centrifugal force to the tickling of groundlings. Thank you, but I think the model of the Niagara Falls will provide me with more of permanent value.

JOCK PARCUTT. Ballet, dancing, acrobats, music-hall, endless opportunity for refreshment. If this were the kind of place one slapped one's thigh with joy, no thigh of mine should go unslapped.

MIGNONNE PARCUTT. Oo, the lights. They shine like naughty deeds in a good world.

MRS. CRAB-BROWN. If anyone suggest that I leave before the fireworks he will just have to go on suggesting it because I shan't.

GUIDE. Let's be the last to leave. I get overtime after eleven.

FINIS

R. G. G. PRICE



*"I don't want to worry you, but he
may be Prime Minister one day."*

BACK ROOM JOYS

Meals in the Open Air

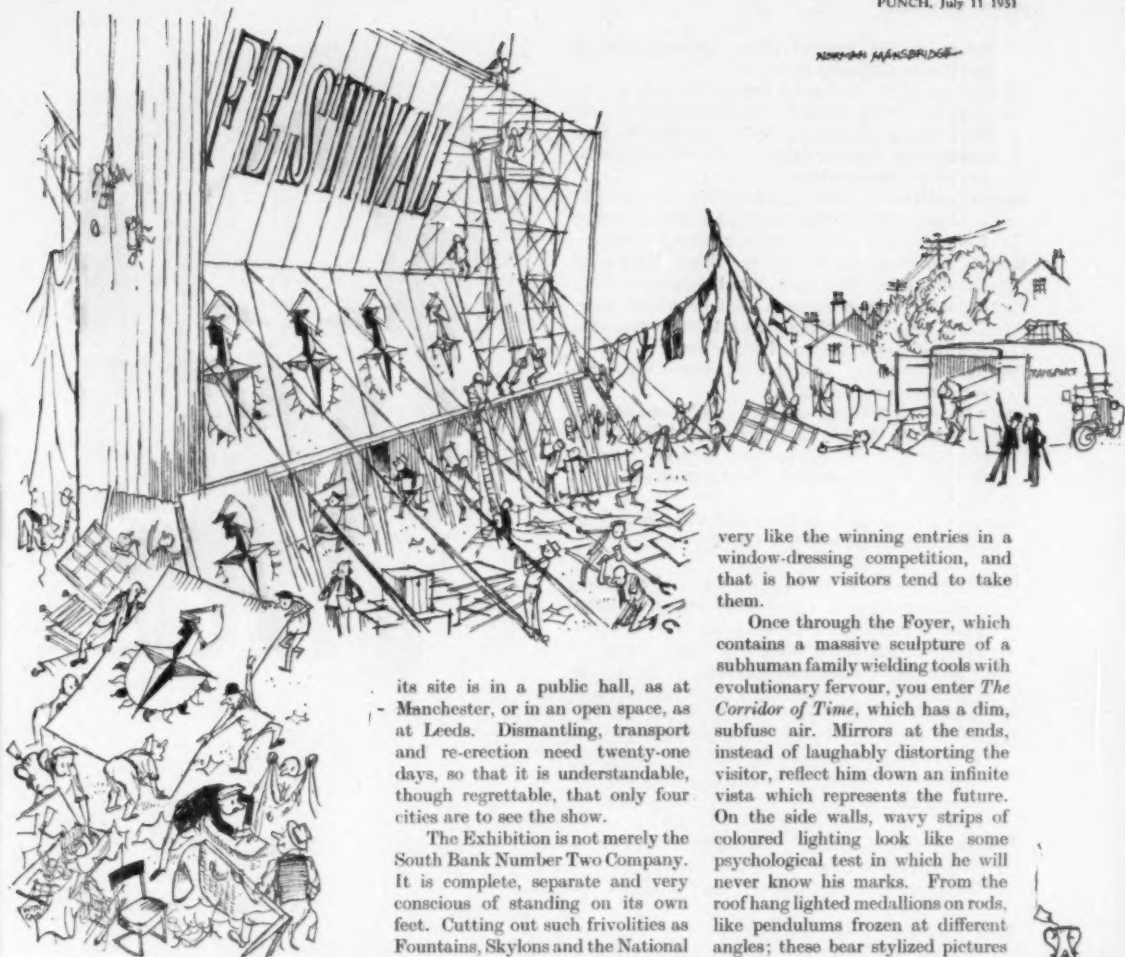
WE are not talking of picnics, the pleasure of which, Unless we are very rich, Depends on whether we like unrelieved cold collations, Packing-up, midges and bodily excruciations; We mean a real meal, but served in the open air, With a table set out on the terrace or under the vine And, ideally, with wine. The sun is warm where our heads and arms are bare; The food is fresher, its colours are brighter looking, And there's no smell of cooking. The cutlery glints, reflecting the blue of the sky (Though the butter melts and the bread gets uncommonly dry).

This is what Nature intended, we feel, this is *right*— And we certainly have a true natural appetite, In the sense of, say, twice our normal.

It's the mixture of free with formal That heightens the charms of each . . . The clear air of heaven, with a waiter well within reach.

JUSTIN RICHARDSON

NORMAN MANSBRIDGE



PERIPATETIC PEP SHOW

THE Festival of Britain Land Travelling Exhibition is not just a sober kind of circus, moving overnight from village green to city recreation ground. It is the largest thing of its kind in the world. The number of exhibits varies between five thousand in the Press Handout and three thousand in the Guide-Catalogue. It covers thirty-five thousand square feet, takes sixty lorry loads to transport and once it is up seems at least as solid as a South Bank pavilion, though the whole is encased in a tent, whether

its site is in a public hall, as at Manchester, or in an open space, as at Leeds. Dismantling, transport and re-erection need twenty-one days, so that it is understandable, though regrettable, that only four cities are to see the show.

The Exhibition is not merely the South Bank Number Two Company. It is complete, separate and very conscious of standing on its own feet. Cutting out such frivolities as Fountains, Skylons and the National Character, it sticks to the theme of The British People and the Things They Make and Do. It is concerned more with the Present than the Past, more with the Factory and the Home than with the Laboratory. The spirit of the Council of Industrial Design broods hard over the proceedings. The bright ingenuity of the Displays rather distracts attention from what the Displays are displaying. These well-lighted, elegant, "amusing" shop-fronts may show that the spirit of the British People will always rise superior to adversity or that British craftsmanship is second to none or that taste-fulness is a good thing; but they are

very like the winning entries in a window-dressing competition, and that is how visitors tend to take them.

Once through the Foyer, which contains a massive sculpture of a subhuman family wielding tools with evolutionary fervour, you enter *The Corridor of Time*, which has a dim, subfusc air. Mirrors at the ends, instead of laughably distorting the visitor, reflect him down an infinite vista which represents the future. On the side walls, wavy strips of coloured lighting look like some psychological test in which he will never know his marks. From the roof hang lighted medallions on rods, like pendulums frozen at different angles; these bear stylized pictures of such technological advances as bronze tools, clocks and steam engines. This diagrammatic history of progress is reinforced by a Voice, which in the tones of Mr. Valentine Dyall points out that humanity has already done pretty well and may reasonably hope to continue onward and upward in the future. All in all, *The Corridor of Time* is *sui generis* to the limit.

Bemused, you enter the *Arena*, officially described as the "Piccadilly Circus of the Exhibition." There is no Eros and the illuminations take the form of attractive patterns based on the arrangement of atoms in crystals. On the ceiling is a

mosaic symbolizing the activities open to modern man. At least, that is my guess. It contains a good deal of symbolism and will probably mean different things to different visitors and thus, perhaps, end by symbolizing the diversity of life. Most of the Arena consists of entrances to the five main sections of the Exhibition.

Discovery and Design is pervaded by another Voice remarking that new materials and techniques introduced in the past century have made home life easier. This smallish room shows the development of methods of measurement, of domestic articles like the hair-brush, the clothes-peg and the hot-water-bottle, of lighting and of plastics. I now know, or at least I have recently known, what I and every Briton owe to polyvinyl chloride and amino-formaldehyde. On the ceiling is a very ingenious display of modern synthetic dyes. The visitor can alter the blending of the fluorescent lighting and bring the various dyes into prominence. As there are not many things that the visitor can do for himself, this is popular.

People at Home is a series of specimen rooms showing how modern design can increase the comfort and elegance of the home. There is also some bad design to sneer at. It is rather a pity that all this bright, brisk newness does not let up occasionally to show how one can tastefully work in heirlooms, wedding presents and junk. The regulations do not allow articles to be priced, and though some of the furnishings are Utility, the impression given is that the delights are intended for the Upper-Middle Income group and that the people of Britain, praised embracingly for their achievements as producers, shrink to a comparatively small section when it comes to consumption. There is the usual attack on the heat-wasting cosiness of the open coal fire and the usual inadequacy of book space. The few book-shelves contain strange mixtures like Dante, the Poems of Sir William Watson and The Annals of Eton College. The favourite author in the Home Beautiful is Goldsmith. In the Garden Room are an adjustable

lamp to clamp on a notice-board, an urn for a philodendron plant, a briar pipe and Mr. Huxley's *Brave New World*.

"What a multitude of activities we can engage in during our leisure time, no matter what our age may be!" the Guide-Catalogue exclaims unanswerably as it beckons us into *People at Play*. This section has even jollier murals than elsewhere, paper sculptures by Mr. Bruce Angrave and also a poem by him, commenting in no uncertain metre on the British attitude to Sport. In the Amateur Radio Cabin, members of local Radio Societies communicate with fellow enthusiasts from the Festival Station—call-sign G.B.3 FB. The Amateur Painter's studio has a good deal of unnaturally tidy equipment but, at Leeds, no amateur painter. I was told that other towns were more enterprising.

People at Work selects one theme, the development of the Gas Turbine and its use, first for jet-propelled aircraft and then for propeller aircraft. It is surprising to find that the first British patent was taken out in 1791. A mysterious notice says that in 1884 C. A. Parsons patented the principles of a modern gas. There are photographs and working models and bits of aeroplanes and large, complicated engines. One very enjoyable exhibit shows a soapy liquid seething in a glass dome with a vertical screw turning below. There is a good deal of printed explanation, a moving graph and informative panels that light in turn to show what is happening. The high spot seemed to be when it "surged." My horse-and-buggy mind was unable to grasp what it was all about; but I loved the "surging."

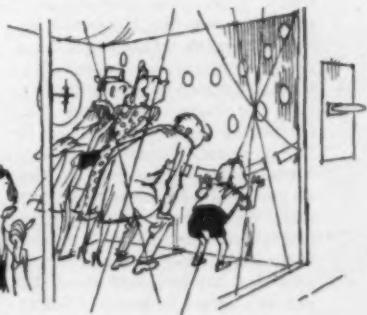
The last section contains no preposition and is called *People Travel*. The Guide-Catalogue points



out that people do this because now the opportunity is open to all. To drive this point home there are a large model of the Bristol Brabazon and a designer's idea of the Rail Car of the future, which has wide observation windows and a circular bar. Road travel is represented by modern motor-cycles, a diorama of new cars and a large comic model of a comic family in a comic car moving comically. The Sea exhibits are a cabin from a pleasure cruiser, models of yachts, and an earnest Knotter who sits all day by the exit of the Exhibition solemnly doing his knots.

I left the tent torn between the desire to modernize at least part of a room and the fear that some future exhibition might pillory the result as an example of outmoded design. Living in the present makes one so dreadfully liable to become the past.

R. G. G. PRICE





Worth a Million

Alfred Pendlebury—STANLEY HOLLOWAY; Henry Holland—ALEC GUINNESS

AT THE PICTURES

The Lavender Hill Mob—Mr. Universe

A NICE balance between absurdity and authenticity makes *The Lavender Hill Mob* (Director: CHARLES CRICHTON) one of the best, if not the best, of the bright Ealing comedies. To work out a fantastic notion with an absolutely straight face is a classic recipe for fun, and here it is followed with very great success—most of the time. Occasionally the face is kept hardly straight enough, and the effect of the fun is weakened by what amounts to a metaphorical dig in the ribs; but, much more often than not, this story of a self-effacing bank official who planned and carried out a stupendous gold robbery, first acquiring a gang or mob to help him with it, is written, directed and acted with the perfect comic touch. It is a triumph particularly for ALEC GUINNESS as the central figure. The character portrayed by STANLEY HOLLOWAY as his flamboyant quotation-booming friend and partner is one Mr. HOLLOWAY must have been familiar with for many years, but Mr. GUINNESS is able to produce what is for him an entirely new personality, reawakening our interest in the attributes of a figure who might so easily be shown as just one more example of a well-known type and in films all too often has been. A good deal has been said about the picture's being a burlesque of Ealing

Studios' own *The Blue Lamp*; this didn't strike me at the time. A certain disrespect may seem to be shown to the police towards the end, and there is a ludicrous chase in which the fugitives steal a police car (including a mechanical gag, which I thought regrettably comic-strip or two-reel-farce, that contrives the irruption of a broadcast song on the police radio); but in effect, if you notice, the police come out of the whole affair well enough. This is an attractive and enjoyable comedy, well acted in small parts as well as by the principals—SIDNEY JAMES is specially good as one of the burglars roped in to the gang—and sprinkled at unexpected moments (script: T. E. B. CLARKE) with amusing little flashes of invention such as that which makes the concealed burglar gloomily consult a railway time-table.

There is much cruder comic treatment of a more obvious theme for satire in *Mr. Universe* (Director: JOSEPH LERNER), but even throughout this are scattered odds and ends of fun that show what it could have been if they hadn't determined to pack in the audience that is satisfied with nothing but the simplest and most inelegant slapstick. This might almost be called a farcical variation on the theme of the boxing film *The Set-up*; using the more easily farcical basis of all-in wrestling instead of

boxing, it builds its story out of artificial gags instead of out of credible character and realistic detail. To hammer in its point, hardly an unfamiliar one, that much all-in wrestling is merely planned entertainment ("You lose—you lose—you win—and you lose," says the manager to his assembled performers before their fights), it studies the career of a spectacularly-knit but simple-minded Adonis who disorganizes the whole racket by his inability to lose when he is told. The climax involves another gag of comic-strip artificiality about a perfume that sends him to sleep. Utterly negligible, as a film; but with enough wisecracks and oddities from JACK CARSON and BERT LAHR to prevent boredom.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Inevitably the London recommendations are, once more, *Four in a Jeep* (20/6/51) and *La Ronde* (16/5/51); the other good ones don't seem to last.

And, once more, releases offer nothing very distinguished. *My Forbidden Past* (4/7/51), a melodrama of old New Orleans, is brightened with interesting un-hackneyed scenes and some dialogue touched with wit. *Never a Dull Moment* would have seemed a very gay, attractive comedy fifteen years ago, but now I, at any rate, seem to have grown out of such things.

RICHARD MALLETT



[Mr. Universe

Not Worth a Dime

Joe Pulaski—BERT LAHR

ART AND THE (PERIOD) CAMERA

A SET of Victorian photographs is fascinating for its pictures of vanished social life, its moments of history stopped and held, its record of the Great as they actually looked—but not least because the early photographers so often displayed an art of their own.

Fine is that "bravery" of recruiting sergeants, posing for the camera of J. Thomson and Adolphe Smith, one sunny London morning in 1876, watched by Westminster street-corner boys in peaked cap or lofty bowler and the bell-bottomed trousers of cockney fashion. A privilege it is to "attend" a Crimean council of war in 1855, as a print by Roger Fenton enables us to do, to watch Lord Raglan, Omar Pasha and General Pelissier making their plans at 4 A.M. for the taking of the Mamelon. Delightful to peep, with the aid of Lewis Carroll, whose hobby it was to photograph celebrities, into the Rossetti family circle of 1863, to see Mrs. Frances Rossetti playing chess with Dante Gabriel while Christina, perhaps, meditates a poem and Maria Francesca dreams of old Italy. All excellent for what they tell us, yet there are other photographs that, over and above the information they give, have so distinguished and personal a style that they may be called "masterpieces."

Is this too much praise for a photograph? Can a mere recording machine have a "style"? As it records impartially, how should one of its products excel, save in technical efficiency or the unusual importance of its subject matter? The strange thing is that the early "masters" did impose an idea of beauty on the machine. They used the "philosophic (scientific) instrument" (as the Great Exhibition classified the camera) as if it were a new painter's medium. They made "compositions" and arrangements of form with all an artist's care. They contrived effects of light and shade, by which in a portrait they expressed to some extent their own idea of character. The fact that sitters had to keep still a long time

(an ordeal they bore with all the Victorian fortitude) was a help, rather than otherwise, to careful aesthetic planning. In result the simple record was modified by the photographer's eye and, more subtly, by the photographer's personality.

These early photographers were interested in painting, and this sympathy (in a way that remains strange) transfers the spirit of Early and mid-Victorian art to the glass negatives of David Octavius Hill and Julia Margaret Cameron. "I wish I could paint a picture like that," said G. F. Watts



when he saw Mrs. Cameron's photograph of her great-niece, little Florence Fisher. Actually he did, or at least the photograph has a haunting resemblance to one of his works. The flower, the leaves pinned in the dress are just as he would have arranged them, the lighting of the features as he would have rendered it; and this resemblance can hardly be accidental. Mrs. Cameron was one of his great friends and admirers, might be called his pupil and even "the Watts of Photography." There have been those who considered her the better portraitist of the two.

She gave her own intensity to Victorian greatness by her powerful "modelling," her eye for the noble curl of a beard—so evident in her "Tennyson" and her "Sir Henry Taylor." Probably Roger Fry overpraised her when he said (of her "Thomas Carlyle") "neither Whistler nor Watts come near to this in breadth of conception, in the logic of plastic evocations, and neither approach the poignancy of this revelation of character." It is true, nevertheless, that by comparison with hers many other photographs, and painted portraits too, seem wooden. "It is as if suddenly the picture began to speak," said Carlyle, reluctantly admitting "something of a likeness" in her portrait of him. A knack of placing, a trick of shadow may be all that achieved this result, but, limited as it was, the art was there, for which credit must be given not to Mrs. Cameron's camera but to herself. Visitors to the exhibition "Masterpieces of Victorian Photography" (from Mr. Gernsheim's abundant collection) now at the V. and A. are able to see how much more she, and one or two others, did than "press the button" and let science take its course.

WILLIAM GAUNT

Festival Invitation to Readers

WOULD you care to see the Punch Room and its famous Table, which will be on view—for the first time since 1934—throughout the summer? If so, please call at the Punch Office, 10 Bouverie Street, E.C.4, on any WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY or FRIDAY between the hours of 10 A.M. and 5 P.M.

You will also be shown a special Exhibition of original drawings that have appeared recently in *Punch*, including coloured originals for the "Festival" number—together with photographs of leading contemporary artists and writers and other "curiosities" of interest to this paper and, we hope, its readers.

Bouverie Street is a turning off Fleet Street, about half-way down on the south side. There is no charge for admission. All you have to do is to get there—we shall be very glad to see you.

THE COPPER CHUTE

"HE won't like those bags of copper piled up like that," said the bank messenger. "Not right outside his door he won't." He spoke reproachfully to the junior clerk, who seemed inclined to dismiss the matter as trivial—but, as if to emphasize its actual importance, the manager came suddenly from his room and, stumbling over one of the bags in question, precipitated himself violently against the unsuspecting figure of his chief clerk, whose attention was being given in about equal parts to a crossword puzzle and yesterday's Stock Exchange prices about a dozen feet away. The chief clerk—ever resourceful in a crisis—quickly turned his newspaper to the financial page, while the manager, after spluttering for a moment or two, drew his second-in-command's notice to the cause of the trouble.

"Strewing bags of copper all over the place like so much confetti," said the manager. "They ought to have more sense. Something must be done about it. Why isn't the stuff being taken downstairs?"

The chief clerk said that so far as he knew the intention had been to remove it to the strong room in the near future, but the floor space near the manager's room had apparently been requisitioned as a temporary dump—no doubt because of its being situated midway between street and stairs. So large a quantity as four hundred pounds' worth took time to move with only two people doing the carrying. What was really wanted was a lift. He then enlarged upon this final theme for some minutes.

"It's no use your harping on that old complaint of yours about a lift. There's little justification for one, and the cost of installation is almost prohibitive. The branch profits don't increase all that much, you know, and I've already made application for some new scoops for the counter. You must tell whoever is responsible to devise some quicker means of getting the bags cleared and instruct someone else to help them. Something must be done. I don't want to risk breaking my

neck each time I come out of my room."

The chief clerk passed on the gist of these remarks to the first cashier, who, being at that moment engaged in sorting through a quantity of silver for a half-crown which he suspected, from a preliminary weighing of the bag, to be counterfeit, went out of his way to be unhelpful. "What does he expect me to do," he demanded scornfully—"borrow an elephant from the zoo? If so, you can tell him that I doubt very much whether the stairs would prove strong enough to support it."

The chief clerk said that perhaps one of the men on the counter could be spared to lend a hand, and looked speculatively along the line.

"I tell you what," remarked the third cashier, strongly suspecting who that man would be and wanting to avoid physical exercise at all costs. "I can remember seeing a long board when I first came here. The previous messenger kept it highly polished, and when a load of copper came in he used to put the board down on the staircase and make a sort of chute for the bags to slide on. Can't understand why they don't use it now—it would save a lot of time."

Under his enthusiastic guidance search was made and the board finally discovered in a cellar. The junior clerk brushed off some of the accumulated dust, while his face registered an expression more indicative of scepticism than relief. He was a far-seeing lad and wondered what would happen to the contents of any bag he failed to stop when it subsequently crashed into the wall behind him; or alternatively what would happen to him if he *did* actually stop it. The stairs were steep and the momentum of a heavy bag containing five pounds' worth of pennies considerable.

Quite a little crowd gathered up above to watch the descent of the first bag. Senior Ledgers jostled with Securities and both were finally ousted from their vantage point by Outward Collections. The messenger had been instructed to join the junior clerk, and much whispered but

unintelligible conversation drifted down to them as they waited tensely below. The ring of a coin suggested that the spectators were engaged in tossing up for precedence in some matter. A minute later and the chief clerk gingerly picked his way downstairs past the improvised chute.

"I've come down to give you fellows a hand," he said. "That makes three upstairs and three down. If we let a bag pass us, it counts one to them; if we manage to stop it, that's one up to us. Now, is everyone ready?"

The score was ten all when the manager arrived on the scene, and so great was the general interest in the contest that some time elapsed before he could force his way through the outer ring of spectators and sum up the situation. In an uncomfortable silence he descended the narrow strip of staircase—but paused to watch a bag of copper, which had been carelessly set loose by a highly strung ledger clerk, slide quickly by. It eluded the frantic clutches of both the chief clerk and the junior, but by falling sideways the messenger was able to seize it as it was about to hit the wall. Forgetting the presence of their manager in the excitement of events, both sides loudly claimed the point. Then the chief clerk appealed to his superior for an impartial decision.

Twenty minutes afterwards the manager watched the dispatch of the final bag and, amidst some applause, gravely announced the score as "forty all"—then he resumed his original quest for an old ledger.

"You won't hear me mention the word 'lift' again, sir," said the chief clerk happily as he followed him into the bookroom.

The manager looked thoughtful. "Well, you know," he said, "I feel rather inclined to press for one now. Think how easily we could have fetched those eighty bags up again for the replay."

Dog's Life

"Wanted.—Young Girl for Kennel. Live in."
Advt. in "Hampshire Chronicle"



"First it was horticulture, then it was statues, and now all we can think about is cricket!"

CONTROLLED IMAGINATION

WHEN I last went to see Bradson in his flat he was lying on his back on the hearth-rug.

"I'm curing my imagination," he explained. "It's been rocky until recently, but I'm all right now. At least," he amended. "I'm getting better."

"I didn't know that your imagination gave you any trouble."

"It's not the sort of thing one spreads about," Bradson said. "I kept it quiet. How is yours these days?"

I tried to inject an earthiness into my laugh that would bring the feeling of normality into the room.

"Usual," I assured him.

He stared at me keenly for a moment or two.

"You don't appreciate normality until you start getting better," he said pointedly. "Now take me, I thought I was normal a year ago."

"You seemed all right to me," I reminded him.

He smiled dreamily and lit a cigarette. I could see his mind was bent in on itself.

"I don't think I remember when it started to get out of control," he said reflectively, "unless maybe it was the night I looked at the back of my head in the mirror." He paused.

"I had been to the barber's. You know the bald feeling?" I nodded understandingly. "It was two mirrors, actually; you hold one in your hand and stand in front of another. Well, as I looked at the rear view of my head I suddenly saw a long line of mes stretching down a corridor of reflections."

"But that's not imagination, that's a fact."

"I know," Bradson said, "but when you find you are trying to put yourself in the place of the last of the images to visualize what it looks like in the direction of the original, that's imagination."

I saw what he meant.

"It could happen to anyone," I consoled him.

"There are an infinite number of reflections in a case like that," Bradson said, with a fixed look on his face. "It was a devil of a long way in. I had to race to be back on time as I put the mirror down."

"I remember once," I said, talking rapidly, "waking up in the night and concentrating on one of those pictures of a man holding a picture of a man who was holding a picture of a man holding a picture—it was very small by this time," I explained to Bradson, "but it appeared to me to be of a man holding something or other—"

"—but you concentrated—"

"—and I tried to find out whether that last man saw the back or not of the previous one. I forget my conclusions; I dropped off to sleep. Does that help?"

He got up and walked round the room.

"I don't want to be bothered with these things," he cried. "They just come. That's why I lie on my back on a hard surface. I find it helps me to concentrate."

"One—two—three—sort of stuff?"

He shook his head. "Not a bit of good," he said. "One and two's all right, but between two and three I find myself considering a bus with all the people sitting *outside*; and between three and four the box within the box within the box routine. Hundreds of 'em. It's nauseating."

"The Chinese do that sort of thing in ivory," I pointed out. "Providing they fit tight I suppose the number could run high."

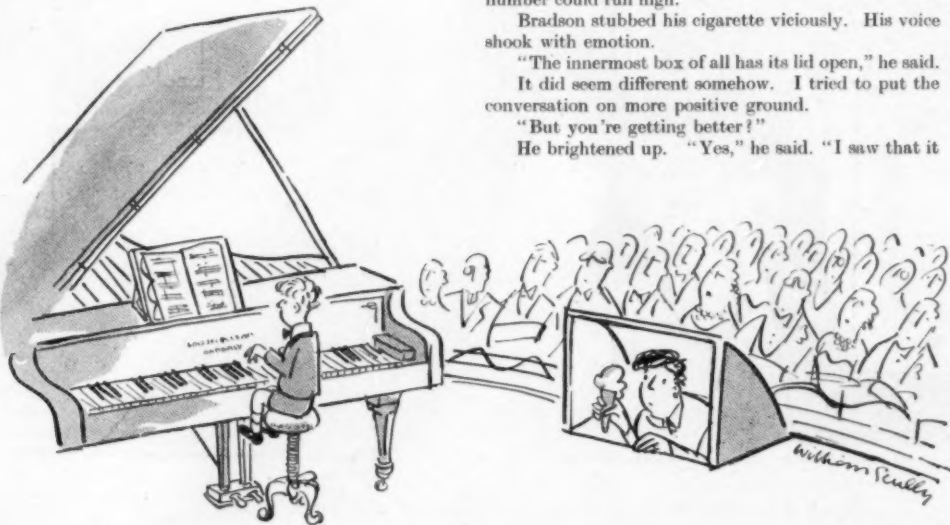
Bradson stubbed his cigarette viciously. His voice shook with emotion.

"The innermost box of all has its lid open," he said.

It did seem different somehow. I tried to put the conversation on more positive ground.

"But you're getting better?"

He brightened up. "Yes," he said. "I saw that it





"No, no, no! Bless my soul! On yer other lock, left, and well down. Blimsy, if only I could drive . . ."

was useless trying to evade the issue. If my mind has been cast with excessive elasticity, it was a waste of time, I decided, to try to defy it; but I determined that I should become master."

It occurred to me at this point to ask him if he were bothered at all with socks that have the major hole at the foot end, closed at the other.

It shook him. "They wouldn't fit," he objected.

"Oh, they are worn in the usual manner," I told him. I think he shivered slightly. I hoped it wouldn't pull him back. "On what exactly do you concentrate?"

"I meet the challenge my imagination puts out," Bradson said. "Just before you came I was doing a picture with the perspective reversed."

"Reversed?"

"You know how it is usual to see things smaller the further they are away?"

"Naturally."

"Well, you do it the opposite way round. The further the things are from you, the bigger they get."

I tried this for a while, with Bradson watching me expectantly. "Well?" he asked.

I wondered if I had turned pale.

"As a matter of fact," I said, in a small voice, "I found myself walking behind one of those letters that are painted with an illusionary third dimension on advertisement hoardings."

He was kind about it, considering.

"Hoarding?"

"It was in the picture," I said defensively. "It wouldn't reverse, I had to go right up to it. I sort of lost control."

He patted my knee somewhat condescendingly. I got up to go; I didn't want pity.

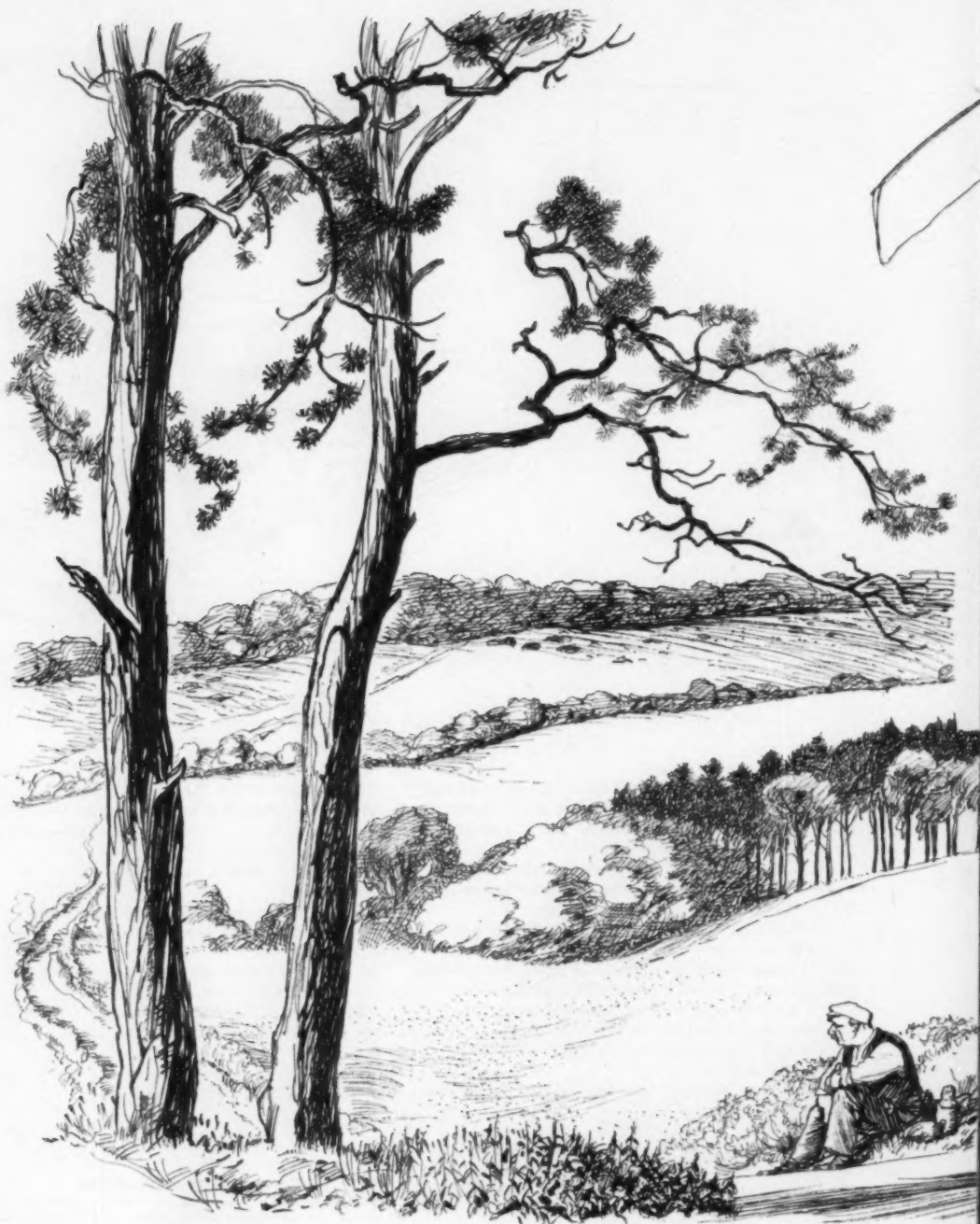
"Ten minutes, night and morning," he reminded me at the door; "you'll soon be all right—look at me."

Already he was far enough away to appear a foot or so taller. I didn't turn round again.

2 2

More Hope for Smith Minor

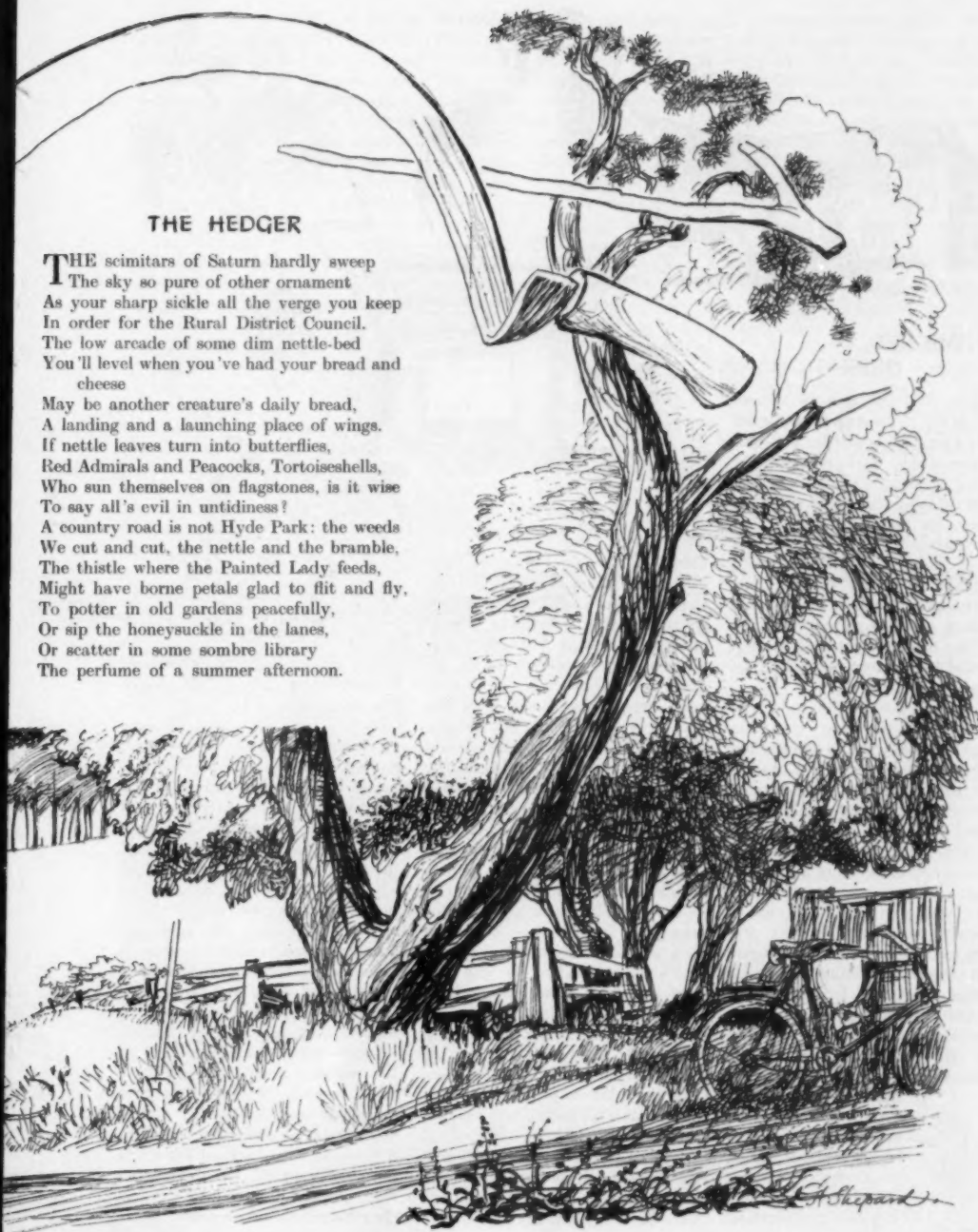
"The growth of a genuine parity of esteem, however, calls for changes of parental attitudes which still equate a black collar job with social respectability."—*The Economist*

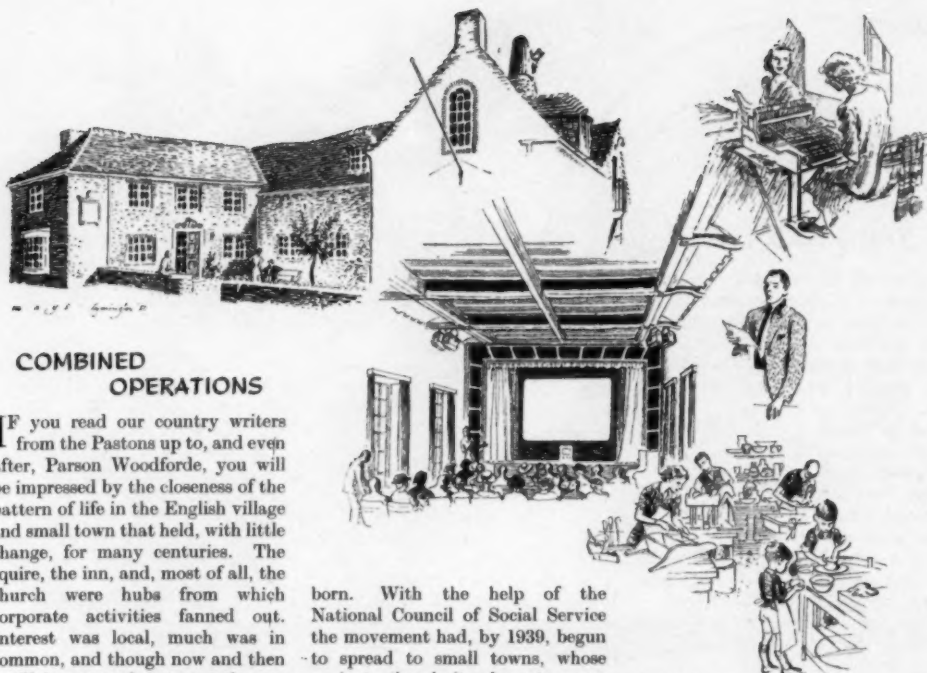


THE HEDGER

THE scimitars of Saturn hardly sweep
The sky so pure of other ornament
As your sharp sickle all the verge you keep
In order for the Rural District Council.
The low arcade of some dim nettle-bed
You'll level when you've had your bread and
cheese

May be another creature's daily bread,
A landing and a launching place of wings.
If nettle leaves turn into butterflies,
Red Admirals and Peacocks, Tortoiseshells,
Who sun themselves on flagstones, is it wise
To say all's evil in untidiness?
A country road is not Hyde Park: the weeds
We cut and cut, the nettle and the bramble,
The thistle where the Painted Lady feeds,
Might have borne petals glad to flit and fly,
To potter in old gardens peacefully,
Or sip the honeysuckle in the lanes,
Or scatter in some sombre library
The perfume of a summer afternoon.





COMBINED OPERATIONS

IF you read our country writers from the Pastons up to, and even after, Parson Woodforde, you will be impressed by the closeness of the pattern of life in the English village and small town that held, with little change, for many centuries. The squire, the inn, and, most of all, the church were hubs from which corporate activities fanned out. Interest was local, much was in common, and though now and then a villain or an absentee at the top wrecked the pattern, it worked, on the whole, pretty well.

It worked until the Industrial Revolution drew men to cities, which became large and hideous and in time scarred by slums. Not until after the First War was the conscience of Parliament awakened to urban conditions, when a great building drive resulted in housing estates outside the cities into which a part of the slums were decanted. That was excellent, but unfortunately too little thought was given to the minds of these refugees from squalor, who found bathrooms a poor exchange for the warm humanity of the East End. Churches, pubs, nursery schools and the rest had often been forgotten by the planners, and so, for purely practical reasons, the people themselves got together, unconsciously pioneering an important social experiment. In such a way were the first Community Associations



born. With the help of the National Council of Social Service the movement had, by 1939, begun to spread to small towns, whose ancient close-knit character was already much watered down by easier communications. Many men and women came back from the Second War and from Civil Defence determined that their comradeship should not be lost, and in the Community Centre idea found some guarantee that life would not congeal again into set grooves; also teachers who had been working with the Forces saw in these Centres a useful medium for continuing informal adult education. Impetus was given by the 1944 Education Act, which made grants available, and since the end of the war over four hundred Associations have either built or adapted premises. The bulk of these Centres are still makeshift, and only half are big enough to justify a full-time Warden, but the idea is growing steadily because it fits logically into the new shape of English life.

The Community Association is the parent body of the Community Centre, though not all Associations have Centres (there are over twelve hundred of the former, grouped

to-day under a National Federation, to nearly five hundred of the latter). The Association is non-party, non-sectarian, classless, and represents all the interests of a town or estate; its aims are to bring people together, to act as a pressure-group for the improvement of local services, and to manage its Centre (if it has one). The Association is thus about the oldest thing in the world—folk with different interests, in discussion for the common good; only the form is fresh. To start one in a new housing estate, where everyone is eager for it, is comparatively simple, but a small town is heavier soil. Its institutions cut horizontally as well as vertically. The untried is met with suspicion, and in the innocent word “community” spaniel-nosed citizens detect a dangerous whiff of Moscow. Unless an exceptional leader is prepared to devote himself to a hard job starting steeply uphill, the Association may quickly decline into a social club that is socially unrepresentative.

The Association we visited, a

post-war development, is in a country town whose beautiful Georgian architecture suggests contentment rather than dynamic civic action—Lymington, in Hampshire. But the figure of twelve hundred members out of a population of eight thousand five hundred speaks for itself, and so does an affiliation list of fifty local bodies—cultural, religious, voluntary service, recreational and many others. This Association, which owes a great deal to the drive and imagination of its Chairman, Mr. Robert Hole, is also lucky in its Centre. A malt-house with a lovely 1750 face has been very skilfully converted to give a large common room, a fine hall for meetings, films and theatricals (a good stage and lighting), a modern kitchen, and a series of timbered attic rooms for classes. The whole place is bright, clean and gay. Except that at present you cannot learn Chinese or Free Ballooning, there seems no limit to the scope of the Association's activities. One look at the teeming information boards in the hall persuades you that something like a gale has hit Lymington: a social gale, a cultural gale, and a gale charged with practical common-sense.

To take the social side first, there is a Youth Club for those between fifteen and twenty-five, with a full programme of games, expeditions, theatricals, and admirable foreign exchanges; and there is an Older Members' Fellowship for the over-sixties, who meet for socials and travel-films and cards, and who cease, so some of them assured me, to be lonely. Inexpensive dances and parties take place frequently, but the most important thing is that

the Centre is open each week-day from ten to ten, and any member can drop in for a snack and a talk. The cheerful volunteers who staff the kitchen (ninety volunteers help with the Centre) are kept hard at it.

Then—horrid but inescapable word—the cultural. Since Lymington has a high proportion of the retired, classes start after lunch and most days go on into the evening. Some lecturers come from outside, others are local. For one week I counted over forty subjects. Here are a few: English Social History, Conversational French, Coastal Navigation (Lymington has an armada of sailing boats at its back door), Etching, Cookery, Weaving. For a term of three months, one class a week, a member pays six shillings! Children have their own courses, such as Painting, Speech and Drama, Dancing. And to this local university for all ages are added a debating Forum that boldly faces religion and politics, a Scientific Film Club, a weekly Women's Hour that provides talks and films while children are looked after, and stimulating exhibitions ("Georgian Lymington" is on at present)—and that is only a very short selection.

Finally, the sphere of common-sense. A Citizens' Advice Bureau (run at the Centre), a Sitters-in Scheme, and an Old People's Welfare Committee are typical of many services sponsored by the Association—services that have sprung up to meet agreed needs. As fresh needs appear other services will follow, for the Association represents a complete cross-section of

Lymington society, and in its carefully democratic organization everyone can have his say. One visit to the Centre is enough to convince the most dubious that Lymington really mixes in it, and mixes profitably. Public opinion is formed there, in open conference, in committee, over companionable cups of coffee; and if something needs doing, it is done. It is done quickly, moreover, because the experts are personally concerned, and in such an atmosphere of goodwill decision is simpler than it can ever be in formal committee.

All this for a basic five shillings a year, and all a mere six-years' growth! Nothing can now stop it expanding. Plans for extensions are out, and already four large huts in the garden are going into use, one for crafts and another for a Youth Hostel. I should have liked to say more about the crafts and their high standard, for there is

great enthusiasm—and in this mass-production age we cannot have enough. Finance rears a head of normal ugliness, but grants have helped and funds are boldly raised. A full-time Warden—the busy diplomat and organizer essential to a Centre of this size—is maintained.

The Lymington Community Centre is a friendly pocket of concentrated civilization, where good citizenship is being translated daily from an empty phrase into action. It offers a flexible unit to bridge our latest social revolution, and the network of its sister Centres promises a new local stability in a changing Britain.

ERIC KEOWN





"I've just got to the bottom of my 'in' tray, and look what I've found—a memo dated March 21st, 1947, giving me a month's notice."

HOLIDAY PROLOGUE

I WENT home for the week-end and told my mother about my holiday plans.

I'm glad, she said, that you and Diana are going to Switzerland. I have always said you ought to travel. It will do you good. It will broaden you. What a good thing you were taught French at school but what a pity you didn't try to learn it as well.

Oh, I don't know, I said defensively. I learned quite a bit. *Avez-vous une bicyclette*, for instance.

Well, my mother said, how far do you think that will get you? I never heard anything so silly. What you ought to do before you go is learn the French for some useful

sentences, like: "Do you think it will be cold enough to-day to wear a woolly cardigan?" "Where is the police station?" "Where is the British Embassy?" "Where can I send a cable to my mother?"

All right, I said.

One thing that puzzles me, my mother went on, is how you think you're going to get enough money.

We're going to economize, I said, and save as much as we can.

My mother laughed. I have seldom seen her laugh so much.

Then suddenly she stopped.

What do you mean, she said sharply, "economize"? Do you mean that you are going to eat only half a bun for lunch? Do you mean

you are going to cut down on your staple diet of baked beans, liver sausage and potato fritters? Are you, in fact, planning to go to Switzerland for a holiday or to convalesce?

I shan't do anything like that, I said.

Yes, you will, my mother said. I know you. I have always known you. And one thing I am certain you won't economize on is smoking. Oh, no. If you were starving you would lie gasping for help with your head wreathed in cigarette smoke.

No, I wouldn't, I said.

Yes, you would, my mother said. I am horrified sometimes when I think of the lining of your stomach. Don't you ever think about the lining of your stomach?

Yes, I said.

No, you don't, my mother said. I don't for a moment believe that you ever think about it.

However, she continued, I do think young people ought to travel, so your father will lend you some money. I'll tell him in the morning.

On the following morning I was in the dining-room while my father rushed about in the hall getting ready to go to the office. My mother followed him. Don't you think, I heard her say, that young people ought to travel? He said, what? My mother said, young people ought to travel. He said, what? So my mother said, I think young people ought to travel, don't you? And he said, oh, yes, yes, yes, yes.

My mother came into the dining-room. That's settled then, she said.

Thank you very much, I said.

That's all right, my mother said. Now, tell me more about where you will stay.

It's a little village on Lake Geneva, I said. We should be able to do some swimming.

Well, I hope you'll be sensible, my mother said. I hope you won't swim in Lake Geneva one minute and go rushing up snowy mountains the next. You'll get pneumonia if you do that. If you catch pneumonia in Switzerland I don't know what I shall do. One of your father's aunts broke an ankle once in Egypt. You must be careful not to slip on a

glacier. You could fall down a crevasse and not be found for hundreds of years. How are you travelling?

We're flying, I said.

Oh, my mother said.

Oh, well, she went on, I suppose you must. I know time is marching on and I must just do my best to struggle along with it. But whatever you do, if you go by an airline that isn't British, make sure that the pilot speaks English. And

be certain that you know how to work your parachute. You must listen carefully when they explain it to you. Try and concentrate. And don't walk in front of the plane while the propellers are going.

It's a pity really, she went on, that I myself have never been to Switzerland.

Why? I asked.

Well, my mother said, if I had I'd know better what to worry about.

MARJORIE RIDDELL



"LET US NOW PRAISE..."

HOW queer is Fame! Great ones are soon forgot.

We seldom speak of Stephenson or Watt.

But lesser blooms long linger on the bough: /

Why, I know followers of Banting now!

Though all the air is humming with his fame,

How often do we hear Marconi's name?

And many a god of library and lab

Must yield to Beeton or to Hansom's cab.

But Morse (the only "Samuel Finley Breese")

Is mentioned much on all the lands and seas:

Though even here we take the lower road—

Forget his Telegraph but praise his Code.

He made a mouthpiece, and a language too

(Marconi had but half the job to do).

Like others who have played a famous part

He scored in Science, but began with Art.

Like others who have earned a cosmic smile

He mainly laboured in this little isle.

He was a Yank; but made the British shore

Aged twenty years. He stayed for twenty more.

He did not start the battle that he won

Till 1832 (then 41).

Yet Britain—here's a melancholy laugh—

Refused a patent for his Telegraph.

Across all Europe he was led a dance—

"No good" in Russia, "nationalized" in France—

But brought his babe, most energetic stork,

Successfully to little old New York.

For twelve long years he laboured in the wild

Before he saw at last the speaking child.

But there it is. By finger, flag, and flash

All round the world we talk his dot-and-dash.

He made the planet smaller than before,

And tied the shipping safely to the shore.

He rules our News, our Commerce, let's confess:

Our lives depend upon his S.O.S.

If he had not, some other chap, of course,

Might well have done it. But the man was Morse.

A. P. H.



AT THE PLAY

The Tempest (STRATFORD-ON-AVON)
Penny Plain (ST. MARTIN'S)

THE *Tempest* invites elaboration. It is one of the least dramatic of Shakespeare's plays, and unless its poetry is superbly spoken it can be much heavier on the stage than in the study. Mr. MICHAEL BENTHALL, fortified by the fact that it was designed as a court masque, has gone out for visual effects in a very big way. His production is like a dream cake that grows richer the more it is consumed, until our gluttonous eyes are finally assailed by the vision of the goddesses with which *Prospero* staggers the intruders, a scene that the most ambitious pantomime would be glad to have. *Juno* goes aloft on a rising stage, while *Iris* and *Ceres* come on in celestial bathchairs of the most expensive workmanship. Well, *Prospero* certainly was a magician—though it always seems to me, as an old-fashioned liberal, that he put his magic to very mean ends in the matter of *Caliban*; and the sense of magic is certainly here. Mr. BENTHALL's cake is never sickly, and is often lovely, for Mr. LOUDON



[The Tempest]

Lost Souls

Caliban—Mr. HUGH GRIFFITH; *Ariel*—Mr. ALAN BADEL

SAINTHILL's settings and dresses are genuinely imaginative; I just feel that Shakespeare has been too much obscured by all the icing. It is the eyes that will remember this production; not enough attention has been given to acting, to speech or to the filling out of character.

The most interesting performances are by Mr. HUGH GRIFFITH and Mr. ALAN BADEL. Mr. GRIFFITH's is a tremendous *Caliban*. It shines through the grotesque trappings of an orang-utan to show pathetic qualities of devotion once he is away from the flashy tyranny of *Prospero*'s conjuring tricks. Mr. BADEL's *Ariel* is a quick, stylized creature of ballet who flits through the incomprehensible geography of the island like an athlete from limbo, loyal but tortured. *Trinculo*, played by Mr. MICHAEL GWYNN, also stands out; he makes the drunk scene as funny as I have ever seen it, a quiet access of befuddlement with no exaggeration. Miss HAZEL PENWARDEN is a very natural *Miranda*, and Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE, *Prospero*, Mr. RICHARD BURTON, *Ferdinand*, Mr. WILLIAM FOX, *Antonio*, and Mr. WILLIAM SQUIRE, *Sebastian*, fit smoothly into their different levels of this grand confection.

Penny Plain cannot quite boast the consistency of *The Lyric Revue*. It has its damp squibs, but it also

has enough wit and talent to make us very grateful for it. The efforts of a large team of writers, artists and musicians have been neatly welded by Mr. LAURIER LISTER. Miss JOYCE GRENFELL's delicate but devastating satires run through the programme like some subtle acid. With Miss ROSE HILL and Miss MOYRA FRASER, against a yawning auditorium painted by Mr. OSBERT LANCASTER, she sacrifices such ardent ladies as lift their voices in competitive song. Alone she is at her best as an ingénue talking to an author. With Mr. JULIAN ORCHARD she rags Tennyson's "Maud" in a way that shocked some but delighted me. Miss ROSE HILL is magnificent as an opera-star deaf to tone, and Mr. DESMOND WALTER-ELLIS, a born comedian, is really funny as a man with a gammy jaw. Miss MARJORIE DUNKELS' brilliant imitation of Miss Peggy Ashcroft endangers the house, and Miss ELISABETH WELCH, Mr. MAX ADRIAN, Miss FRASER and others of a good team are on the whole well served.

Recommended

Peter Brook's production of *The Winter's Tale* (Phoenix) with John Gielgud, Diana Wynyard and Flora Robson is a sterling addition to the Festival. Don't forget that the Old Vic *Henry V* can be seen this week.

ERIC KEOWN



[Penny Plain]

Blithe Spirit

MISS JOYCE GRENFELL

BEST SELLER

"BUSINESS," I said to Simpson, "does not seem to be very brisk. How many copies of *My Four Years in Kugombaland* have you sold?"

"Three," he said.

I smiled complacently. "I have got rid of no fewer than five copies of my own book, *Kugomba Memories*," I told him. "Which suggests that the *Burthampstead Echo* were right in describing it as the best book on Africa they had seen for a long time."

"The *Castleford Gazette*," said Simpson coldly, "made exactly the same remark about *My Four Years in Kugombaland*."

"It was a pure coincidence, of course," I said nastily, "that the same issue of the paper carried a four-inch advertisement for the book."

It was a swelteringly hot afternoon, and for two hours we had been sitting side by side at a little table under a tree in the vicarage garden, selling autographed copies of our books (which were both published in 1946) in aid of the Death Watch Beetle Extermination Fund. The vicar had flattered us into believing that our stall would be the high spot of the Fête, and we had both written to our publishers asking them, as a favour, to let us have twelve dozen copies of our books at reduced prices.

My own publishers had replied with almost indecent haste that I could have as many copies as I wanted at ninepence, since they were to be sold for such a good cause. Simpson pretended that his publishers had been loth to part with any copies at all at less than the trade price, but I did not believe him.

At the beginning of the afternoon we had priced the books at the original published price of seven-and-sixpence, but after half an hour Simpson reduced *My Four Years in Kugombaland* to five shillings, and I countered by offering *Kugomba Memories* at three-and-six. He replied by bringing his price down to half-a-crown, and then, to stop what would have been a suicidal price-cutting war, we agreed to fix a final price of one-and-six.

It was very hot, and I felt that with a five-three lead on sales I could afford to relax, and went off to get a cup of tea at the refreshment stall.

I was only absent ten minutes, but when I returned Simpson was smiling all over his face.

"You missed the best business of the afternoon," he said. "There was quite a rush as soon as you had gone, and I have sold six more copies of *My Four Years in Kugombaland*. I did my best to unload a few *Kugomba Memories* as well, but the customers were people of taste and discrimination, and they wouldn't look at them."

He swaggered off to get a cup of tea, and I was left in a lonely state. All the other stalls seemed to be doing a good business, but autographed books were clearly a drug on the market. I called to McHiggins,

the vicar's gardener, who was bending over a bed of geraniums.

"Take this parcel of books," I said, "and hide it until the Fête is over, then give it back to me."

I slipped half-a-crown into his hand, and when Simpson came back I greeted him cheerfully.

"I've sold six more," I said. "Which makes the score eleven-nine in my favour. I did my best to get rid of a few copies of *My Four Years in Kugombaland*, but people just sniffed."

There were no more sales, and poor Simpson was so crestfallen at being beaten that I felt rather guilty about the trick I had played, until the gardener handed me a brown-paper parcel as I went out through the gate.

It contained six copies of Simpson's *My Four Years in Kugombaland*. D. H. BARBER





IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Monday, July 2nd

Mr. PETER THORNEYCROFT, the Opposition's acknowledged authority on transport problems (and their solution,

which is not always the same thing), and Mr. ALFRED BARNES, the Minister of Transport, always fill the House of Commons when they are "billed" to meet in single combat. It is, to use the language of quite another sphere, a needle match, and there is nothing the House likes more than a really good, harp-hitting contest, with plenty of what Mr. Speaker likes to call the "cut-and-thrust of debate" and what the less exalted call "fireworks."

This afternoon's performance was well up to standard. There was Mr. T., in the full glory of a tropical suit of surpassing creaminess. There was Mr. B., in all the severity of official Treasury Bench garb, and armed with a vast dossier resembling the traditional armful of rackets. There was Mr. T. darting skilfully-worded, searing questions. And there was Mr. B., taking them coolly as they came and either flinging the accompanying taunts back or (more often) just letting them whizz by like so many fast services at Wimbledon.

There was, indeed, something of a Centre Court atmosphere about the House to-day. Many male Members appeared in tropical kit, and nearly all the women Members wore their gayest frocks—with Lady MEGAN LLOYD GEORGE and Miss ALICE BACON, as usual, contriving to look cooler than any. There was, too, that rhythmic swing of the heads from one side of the House to the other as Mr. T. and Mr. B. really got going, with Mr. Speaker in the umpire's chair occasionally interrupting play when things got too lively.

It was not very clear what it was all about, except that "C" transport licences and that sort of thing came into the argument from time to time.

No sooner had the two chief combatants bowed sportingly to each other to signify the end of the match (one almost expected to see each take a flying leap over the Table to congratulate his opponent) than Mr. VANE confronted the Minister, with a stern demand that he "motor along A.6" in order to test the perils resulting from odd bits of machinery and other knobbly excrescences that protruded from lorries on that popular route. The Minister replied that he *often* used the road, and left it at that, as if to say that the mere fact that he still



Impressions of Parliamentarians

Lord (Bertrand) Russell

lived showed the complaint to be unfounded.

Lord MALCOLM DOUGLAS-HAMILTON, that most loyal of Scots, then raised a complaint about road-surfaces over the Border, saying bluntly that "the deterioration in Scottish roads was proceeding at a higher rate than reconstruction." The Minister replied soothingly that things were not so bad as they were painted.

Even the normally infallible Question-paper seemed to have been affected a little by the sudden coming of summer heat, for one "Lieut-Commander BALDOCK" was down to ask questions 9 and 10, "Mr. BALDOCK" question 38. An eager House, always on the lookout for minor diversions, discovered that it was the same man, and gave him a little cheer for what The Profession calls a quick-change act.

Mr. MORRISON announced that the Communist commanders in Korea had agreed to talk about a cease-fire, and then Mr. NOEL-BAKER announced a sweeping reconstruction of the National Coal Board, including the retirement of Lord HYNDLEY, the Chairman. A cynic remarked that, in view of the actual and prospective shortage of domestic coal, that made *two* statements about a cease-fire.

However, normality returned when the House went on to talk yet again about the Finance Bill (report stage), which occupied its attention until almost 2 A.M., when it was completed. The Chancellor, the Attorney-General, and Mr. DOUGLAS JAY, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, wore the expressions parents wear (or are supposed to) when their loved ones go out into the cold, cruel world. But underneath, in their secret hearts, no doubt a certain relief was mingled with their anxiety.

Tuesday, July 3rd

There was a startling interlude in the Lower House, which left the denizens of the public galleries round-eyed with wonder, those of the Floor rocking with laughter. Miss IRENE WARD, who has a powerful but melodious voice, happens to sit very close to one of the microphones. Mr. HUGH DALTON, on the Treasury Bench, has never needed any artificial amplification to rival Stentor at his most stentorian. Miss WARD wanted to ask a question of Mr. DALTON. She did so, and the galleries jumped as a mighty feminine roar came from the loud-speakers. Miss WARD looked reproachfully at the House as it roared with laughter. Then, not apparently realizing that he was replying in kind, or that another mike was by his elbow, Mr. DALTON yelled a reply—provoking another wave of laughter that might have

House of Lords:
Bills Become Acts
House of Commons:
Battle of Stentors



"Children these days get too much entertainment provided for them."

been heard in the rival Fun Fair at Battersea.

Eventually the tumult and the shouting died, and Mr. ELLIS SMITH, who often makes very thoughtful suggestions from his eyrie on a back bench, asked that something should be done to forbid the pollution of the atmosphere with smoke and fumes. He added, not unreasonably the House thought, that, many hours having been given to consideration of a law against the pollution of rivers, *some* thought might be given to the air. This idea got such a cheer that the Government promised to think about it.

(It so happened that, at that very moment, their Lordships, not very far away along the corridor, were passing the Bill against the pollution of rivers.)

The Finance Bill got its third reading, moved by Mr. DOUGLAS JAY, without so much as a division, and the House proceeded to pass through all stages a Bill to authorize a loan of £1 million to meet over-

spending on the Festival of Britain Fun Fair. Nothing really wounding was said by the Opposition ("delay, incompetence and waste" being accepted as common form) and Mr. RICHARD STOKES, inheritor of the responsibilities, if not the title, of Lord Festival, almost beamed.

During a debate on clothing prices Sir WILLIAM DARLING, whose sartorial tastes are anything but uniform, offered the suggestion that those voracious consumers (to use the Whitehall expression) of clothes, boys under fourteen, should have a uniform consisting of standard flannel bags, standard shoes and socks, with, presumably, non-uniform, non-standard "accessories."

The brightest event in the Commons' dullish day was the arrival of Black Rod to summon them to the House of Peers to hear the Royal Assent signified to a number of Bills. Both Houses wore the satisfied "something-attempted-something-done" expressions appropriate to the occasion.

Wednesday, July 4th

Mr. ATTLEE was asked about a speech by Mr. SHINWELL which indicated that "at the slightest sign" the Government

would be only too willing to curtail rearmament. He replied that the sentiments, when read in full and in their context, were correct, and this started a shindy of a blazing fury not known for months.

Mr. ATTLEE and Mr. CHURCHILL bellowed at each other across the Table, and the two sides of the House joined in until Bedlam reigned. Even when they sat down, the two leaders continued the verbal battle, one pale, the other crimson in the face. After a time Mr. Speaker mildly commented that "a state of heat" seemed to have arisen, and stopped the fight. But the matter is to be raised again.

Then, in a very different atmosphere, the gift of a Mace to the Australian Parliament and a Speaker's Chair to New Zealand's was voted by general consent.

BOOKING OFFICE

Mixed Bag



R. H. E. BATES seems to me to do two things particularly well. He can express in simple and dramatic language the inner tragedies of the incoherent, and he can present background with exceptional clarity, so that, our senses sharpened by his lean, objective prose, we are made vividly aware of the exact and significant appearance of a dawn in India or the ancient cluttered muddle of a farmyard. At times he is almost more interested in places than people, and then his characters can be no more than emotional types; but when these two special powers are equally married we get something of great beauty, as in "The Little Farm," the first short story in his new collection, *Colonel Julian*.

This typical Bates story is about a small farmer, cheated and lonely, whose life blossoms wonderfully with the arrival of a young housekeeper who becomes his mistress. He is shattered when, without warning, she leaves him. The remoteness of the farm, the man's touching surprise that he can be made happy, his hopeless inability to convey his feelings, his dumb misery at the end, all these are used brilliantly by Mr. Bates to achieve the kind of commentary on life at which he excels. The title-story, describing a brief wartime friendship between a very old soldier and a fighter-pilot is a reminder of how well—better than any

other writer—"Flying Officer X" penetrated the casual façade of the Air Force.

I like him least in comedy. There are two of his Uncle Silas series here which I think are only mechanically funny. In satire he can also be uncertain, as in his study of lachrymose nostalgia, "The Flag." But many of these stories reflect an acute knowledge of the human heart. Most of them are dark in outlook, but, as one reads, the curious fact emerges that all but one—and that is called "A Christmas Song"—are drenched in sun. The heat of summer and all the possible varieties of burning and blinding sunlight exercise over Mr. Bates a fascination that, a little monotonously, colours the book.

From America come very different tales, *The Injustice Collectors*. Mr. Louis Auchincloss demonstrates in eight long stories the theory that certain people by their mental attitudes unconsciously attract unhappiness or disaster. He is a very civilized writer, though capable of being ruthless; he sees his characters as part of a complicated pattern of society which he takes to bits without prejudice and with critical irony. In his stories is none of the violence or the sentimentality disguised as toughness into which too many of his country's authors have been led; instead there is detachment and a wit that does not exclude compassion. In a brief compass he builds up such a complete file about his unfortunates that we seem to know them from every angle. "Greg's Peg" is an excellent example of his method. It deals with an effeminate little man who comes unstuck in a wild effort to justify himself as a social lion, and its point, which is a good one, is that whereas he imagines he is under his mother's domination, it is he who does the clutching. These clever stories should certainly be read.

Much as I admire the plays of Mr. Christopher Fry, who is clearly the most exciting writer in our theatre to-day, I think it is far too soon to attempt a large-scale estimate of his work. When the time comes for this it must be done critically, and not in the defiant spirit of hero-worship that marks Mr. Derek Stanford's *Christopher Fry*. Here is a sample of Mr. Stanford's awe-struck prose: Mr. Fry's sense of mystery, he suggests, "owes something to a mode of composition removed from the eye of daylight reason, free from the censorship of crude pragmatic thought." In other words, Mr. Fry, and why not, likes to write at night. Poor Mr. Fry is scarcely allowed to make a joke without a frantic scramble after profundity. This book, though it often wraps up the obvious in the longest words imaginable, occasionally hits the mark quite shrewdly—for instance, in its comments on "The Cocktail Party"; but its absurd generalizations, such as that "wit . . . constitutes Anouilh's sole merit" and that he is deficient in humour and pathos (hasn't Mr. Stanford seen "Point of Departure"?), its bland conviction that Mr. Stanford alone holds the key to the master, and its calamitous number of misprints are not in its favour.

ERIC KEOWN



"Waging the Peace"

Mr. Paul Hoffman, former Administrator of the Marshall Aid Plan, outlines proposals in *Peace Can Be Won* involving efforts and expenditures that might seem impossibly immense until balanced against the multitudinous strength of the great and free American people. Not content to see human liberty at the mercy of a tyranny powered by millionfold slave-labour he plans, while maintaining strict military preparedness, to deliver immediate counter-attacks on what he defines as the economic, political and information fronts. Speaking with all the authority of his superb experience he is particularly effective in urging the aggressive deployment of wit, humour and ridicule, in all countries reached by Soviet propaganda, against the Kremlin's manifest lies, breaches of faith and barbarism to the common man. He will never allow his fellow countrymen to forget that they are now accepting, inescapably even if unwillingly, world responsibilities in the name of world freedom. The time has come, he declares, to make their cherished liberties the foundation of universal law.

C. C. P.

Good Deed in a Naughty World

It is refreshing when a book-jacket pronounces a frank criticism, obviously beyond the writer's intention. Of Walter de la Mare the jacket of his *Winged Chariot* remarks "His poetry shines with a light strong enough to illuminate the darkness of the contemporary world." That is precisely it. His poetry illuminates darkness, kindles fairy-lights, turns bad dreams into good; it does not dispel darkness, it does not awaken. Still there is need for such illumination, and at this Mr. de la Mare again excels. The question "What jewelled repeater edged the cuckoo's wing?" gives the keynote for his full-length stereoscopic and stereophonic documentary on time and time-keeping. Produced with exquisite sensibility and delicate rhythms this pageant of horologies passes by, rising to the affirmation:

"Yet never fiend that trod Earth's crust could break

Man's steadfast soul while he was ware and wake."

In this affirmation Mr. de la Mare transcends his limitations; reaching his full stature, he momentarily stands up to the daylight.

HH

Deipnosophism

The publishers believe Mr. Robertson Davies' *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* to be akin to Beachcomber and Nat Gubbins; Sir Norman Birkett in his Foreword calls it good conversation on the printed page. It cannot well be both these things, and Sir Norman's version seems nearer the truth. Good conversation depends on wide reading and a store of miscellaneous and not too exact information; Marchbanks has both. Mr. Davies writes in Canada, and a few of his subjects—skunks, bush-fires, bear-hunts—are local, but the rest derive from universal experience universally discussed.

Marchbanks finds, however, many good new things to say, especially in his asides and parentheses, whose unexpected impact should draw laughter even from those who do not laugh easily. He lives up to his boast of "an incorrigibly frivolous and vacillating mind," his puns are neat and bearable, he uses nice words like "deipnosophist" and "borborygmies," while his touches of what Mr. Polly called "Raboo-loose" do not come amiss. But he must *not* talk about "Bobbie" Burns.

H. B.

The Little Match-girl

Of course, it would be absurd to say that it is a pity Miss Ann Stafford was born too late to stir the Victorian social conscience; yet her novel, *Bess*, shows how splendidly she would have sided with Mrs. Besant, Mr. Stead and Mr. William Morris—all of whom appear in the book. As it is, the story makes us long to pommel our forbears, and we are bewitched by Bess while not quite believing in her. She was a Becky Sharp of the slums—an illegitimate waif who worked in the match factory where her young sister and many others caught "phossy jaw"—an occupational and neglected disease. Later, Bess went into service and tried pathetically to "better herself" by reading a boy's Latin grammar. She nearly became a rich man's mistress, she nearly went to Girton and she nearly married a doctor's son. In between times she returned to the slums, fought in and for them, and found it "was such lonely work—climbing above your station." She is a great character—



"Yes, that's fine, thanks."

pathetic, proud, tender, insolent and coat-trailing, but just a little too large for life. If her creator had toned her down, even a little, the persecutors of her generation might have more reason to stir in their graves.

B. E. B.

China Out-of-date

Heavensent, which the author of "Lady Precious Stream" recommends as a characteristic masterpiece by China's best novelist, Mr. Shu She-Yu, is a sagacious and winning portrait of a foundling boy in his adopted home. Published as it was written, in enjoyable English, it tells how a childless couple—he a rich, homely tradesman, she the proud scion of official circles—who cannot decide to adopt a baby from either milieu, find a new-born boy on their door-step. Here is the heir-designate to the warehouses! Here is the future official! But his immediate need is for a meal. So Nurse Chi is added to Mr. and Mrs. Niu's household, which already contains old Mrs. Lu the cook and Fourth Tiger the boy-of-all-work; and they live happily together for twenty years. The Revolution ends the idyll; but it is the pride of such unassuming classics as this to keep the pattern of the good life laid by in lavender for more auspicious days.

H. P. E.

Self-portrait

Mr. Cecil Beaton's *Photobiography* is a gossip account of his life as a professional photographer, highly embellished with examples of his work. It should



appeal to every section of his varied public, from the harassed members of the School Photographic Society to the ultra-chic. His book about his country house was affected and a little silly. This is mainly about his job and reveals the hard core of seriousness which has made him a pioneer in modern photography and in stage design. It is readably confected, with plenty of amusing anecdotes about celebrities; but the centre of it is the account of a triumph of will. The information about the procedure for taking Royal photographs is particularly interesting and the examples of Royal conversation quoted are so gay and witty that one wishes the Press would sometimes forget their funereal discretion and report more. The illustrations show Mr. Beaton as both artist and virtuoso. His war pictures are magnificent.

R. G. G. F.

Woodmen

In editing Thoreau's three accounts of his explorations in *The Maine Woods*, undertaken in the years 1846, 1853 and 1857, two of which accounts were published in the author's lifetime, Mr. Dudley C. Lunt has accomplished one of the most workmanlike literary jobs of this century. Had Thoreau lived there is little doubt that he would have rearranged his material, cutting out journalistic repetition, expanding journal abbreviations, and condensing passages much as Mr. Lunt has done. The integrity of the text has been scrupulously observed; and Thoreau's quality of lazy energy, his acute observation and sensitive fidelity of reporting stand forth steadily in these pages. At all points where editorship of this high order has necessitated divergencies from or dovetailings of texts so long accepted, clear, terse notes explain how and why such alterations have been made. The illustrations by Henry B. Kane are peculiarly in key with Thoreau's book as with Lunt's editorship.

R. C. S.

Books Reviewed Above

- Colonel Julian.* H. E. Bates. (Michael Joseph, 10/6)
The Infjustice Collectors. Louis Auchincloss. (Gollancz, 10/6)
Christopher Fry. Derek Stanford. (Peter Nevill, 12/6)
Peace Can Be Won. Paul Hoffman. (Michael Joseph, 8/6)
Winged Chariot. Walter de la Mare. (Faber, 10/6)
The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks. Robertson Davies. (Chatto and Windus, 10/6)
Bess. Ann Stafford. (Hodder and Stoughton, 12/6)
Heavensent. Shu She-Yu. (Dent, 10/6)
Photobiography. Cecil Beaton. (Odhams, 18/-)
The Maine Woods. H. D. Thoreau. Arranged with notes by Dudley C. Lunt. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 16/-)

Other Recommended Books

British and American English Since 1900. Eric Partridge and John W. Clark. (Dakers, 18/-) Latest in the Twentieth Century Histories series is an argumentative, discursive, highly entertaining study of what has happened to both literary and spoken English in the last fifty years. Chapters by other contributors on "Dominions English," "Cockney" and other special divisions of the subject.

Sporting Rhapody. Hylton Cleaver. (Hutchinson, 15/-) Lively memoirs of an armchair all-rounder: full of interesting and provocative comment on football, rowing, riding, cricket, athletics, golf. Good-humoured, witty. Illustrated.

ONE MAN AND HIS DOG

I HAD gone out after breakfast to post a letter. Although the pillar-box is only about fifty yards from the gate I usually make the journey by motor-cycle, but the morning was fine and I had shaved. So I walked and swung my walking-stick energetically in the bright rain-washed lane. I was in excellent spirits: the slight shaving cut in my chin had stopped bleeding and my "duck" against Alfold on the previous Saturday had already misted into anonymity and obscurity.

I covered the first thirty yards or so without incident. Then, as I neared the pillar-box, I noticed that a car was drawn up near the Cowper's place, a pleasant cottage some forty yards farther up the lane. There was a man in the driver's seat and he seemed to be reading a newspaper. I pushed my letter into the box and heard it settle down. Then I took another look at the car.

The man was now standing in the lane, and I recognized him immediately as the Cowper's Danish visitor, a brilliant young doctor from Copenhagen. I had been introduced to him only two days earlier at The Crown when he had been politely enthusiastic about the South Bank Exhibition.

I raised my left hand in salute and grinned extravagantly. A grin has to be extravagant to be detected at forty yards.

He did not respond. Obviously he had not identified me. I waved again and walked towards him slowly. He nodded nervously and non-committally. In my gardening flannels and tartan shirt, and with a patch of tissue paper sticking to the cut in my chin, I probably looked very different from the man who had played darts in a neat grey pin-stripe at The Crown. Anyway, it was clear from the Dane's puzzled expression that he still had not recognized me.

And then, to my mortification, I realized that he was not the Cowper's Danish visitor. He was older, much older, and his face, under the thatch of light hair, was heavier and less alert. I stopped and for a few seconds stood irresolute.



I still think that I should have behaved sensibly had Rufus not appeared. I should have laughed and said "I'm awfully sorry. I thought you were somebody else," and he would have smiled (possibly) and I should have turned away and walked home only slightly red about the ears. But there was a movement in the ditch some twenty yards behind the man with the car and Rufus's shaggy head popped up.

"Here, Rufus!" I heard myself say. "Rufus!"

Rufus cocked an ear and studied me curiously. I raised my left hand in salute, grinned extravagantly and looked right through the man with the car.

"Rufie!" I shouted. "Here, Rufie!"

Now Rufus is no friend of mine and he knows it. Rufus belongs to the Sawyers, and the Sawyers have more than once refused to cut down an old ramshackle oak that spoils our view of the Weald. Besides I am not at all fond of dogs, certainly not of a dog that is allowed to

run wild and ravage people's gardens.

I have thrown pebbles at Rufus before now; yet here I was waving to him idiotically and calling him by name.

"Good dog," I said. "Here, Rufus!"

Rufus stood still, his tail at half-mast, while the space between his floppy ears became turbulent with mental strife. To accept my proffered hand of friendship might mean free access to an interesting garden and unlimited romps with my black Minorcas; or it might mean a cuff of betrayal.

Rufus decided to risk a rebuff. He leapt forward playfully and began to run round me in circles.

"Good boy, Rufus," I said. "Here, Rufie!"

Rufus barked happily.

"Come on, Rufie," I said, and turned for home.

I walked up the drive with Rufus.

Then I heard the car start up. I heard it getting nearer. I saw it swing into the drive. The man climbed out of the car and stood with his hands on his hips, staring at me. His expression was most unfriendly.

"Rover," he commanded, "come here!"

The dog ran back to his master and jumped into the car. The man gave me one long look, got into the car, backed out into the lane, and drove down the hill towards Guildford. **BERNARD HOLLOWOOD**

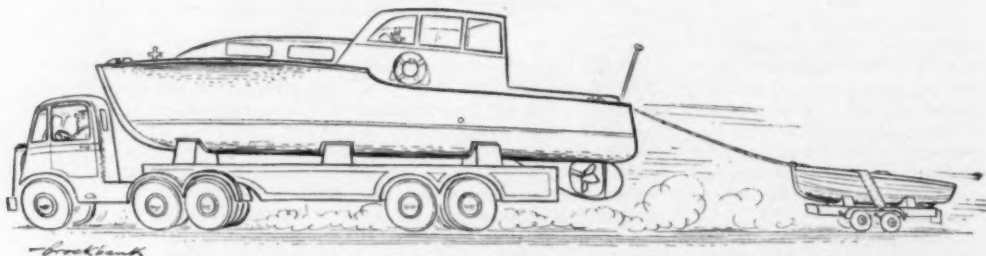
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the middle distance,
And elbow-propped Executives as far as eye can reach
(where
Female Clerical Assistants flaunt their beachwear)
And doze, or ruminate the phrases of some unforgiving
minute,
And drink vast quantities of tea with Oriental spices
in it,
While on a crimson ottoman, luxurious and faintly
sinister,
Sits the Minister.

And when the darkness reaches up to emphasize the
stars
Winged warriors in shorts, with whiskers shaped like
handlebars,
Will peer at the thermometer, and cautiously remove
their topis,
What time some Marshal of the Air, like Krishna and
the Gopis,
With soft persuasive voice, and burning godlike glance,
Leads a regiment of bureaucratic women in the
dithyrambic dance,
And the warm and jasmine scented airs caress the
cheek and stir the blood . . .
And far below
We ordinary mortals shuffle duffle-coated homeward
through the mud.



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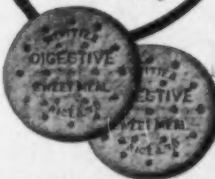
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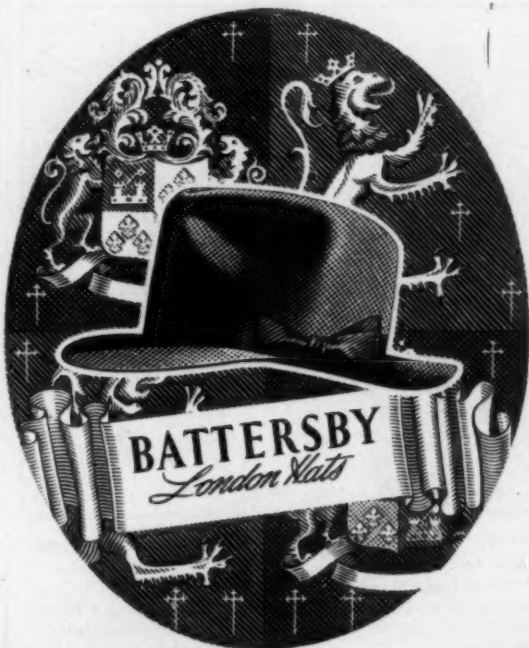


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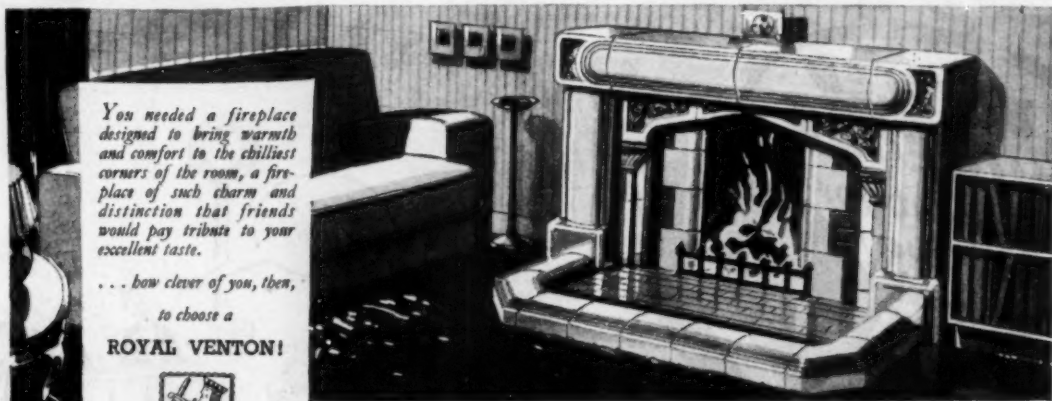
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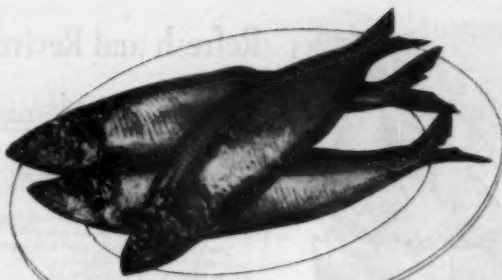
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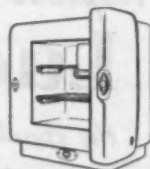
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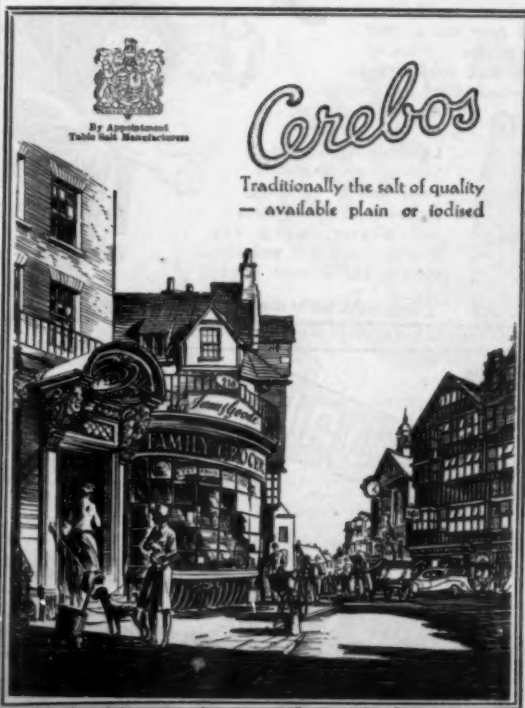
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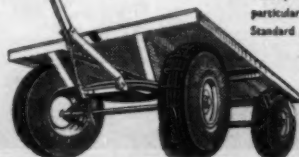


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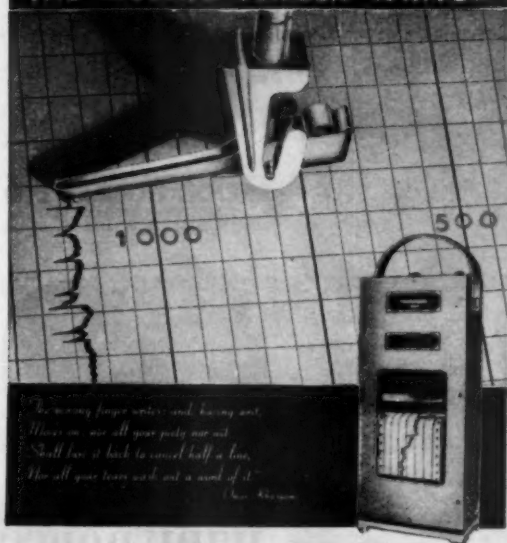
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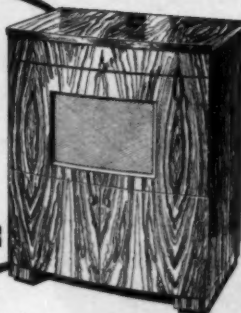
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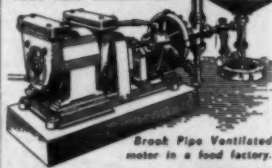
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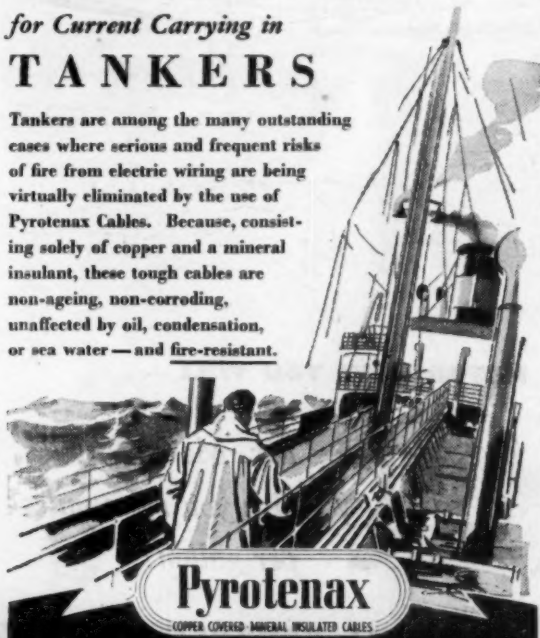
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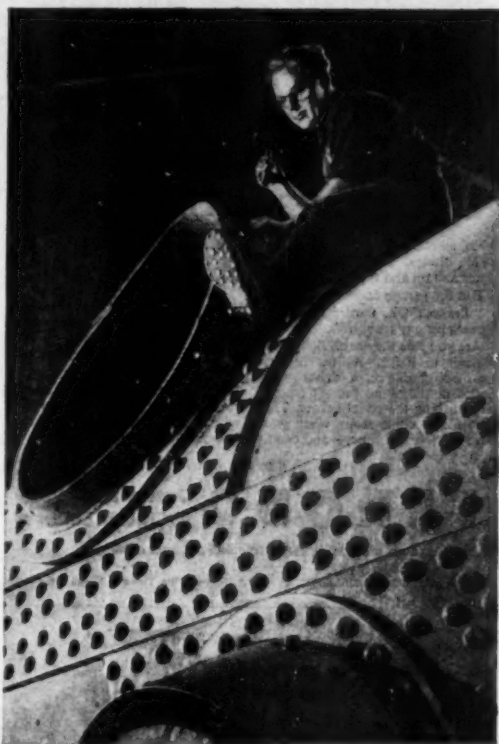
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